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ERRATA.

- Page 26, line 22, *omit* has.
- 35, line 24, *for* univereal *read* universal.
- 48, line 32, *insert* the *before* Unity's.
- 67, line 13, *for* averse *read* adverse.
- 83, line 18, *omit* to *before* forget.
- 84, line 22, *insert* the *before* other.
- 99, line 1, *for* oursslves *read* ourselves.
- 118, line 21, *for* lead *read* tend.
- 124, line 9, *for* have *read* has.
- 128, line 6, *for* exercise *read* exercises.

RESULTS

OF THE SYNOD OF THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH HELD AT
HERRNHUT, IN THE YEAR 1857.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Synod of 1857, convened by the Unity's Elders' Conference, met in Herrnhut on the 8th of June, and was solemnly opened by Brother JOHN MARTIN NITSCHMAN, President of the Unity's Elders' Conference. During the twelve weeks of its sittings, everything relating to the general concerns of the Brethren's Unity was taken into careful consideration, and the resolutions contained in the following Results agreed upon. Particulars of the solemn opening, the course of proceedings, and the close of the Synod, on the 1st of September, will be found in the historical Appendix.

A brief notice of the *principles* on which these Results have been compiled, is all that need here be given.

Hitherto, no marked distinction has been made in our Synodal Results between *general* and *provincial* regulations; and the latter have had special respect to the German congregations, as, in the absence of Provincial Synods for the European Continent, this portion of the Unity depended altogether on the General Synods for its legislation. It has been the object of the present Synod, by an exact demarcation between the general and the provincial, and a clear defining of the respective jurisdictions of General and Provincial Synods, to make it possible to exclude from the general Results every rule and arrangement which, from its nature, could have only a local application.

Yet, as it appeared desirable that the diversities in the constitution of each Province, and the manner of using the lot in each, should be known by all, the constitutions of the several Provinces, as sanctioned by the Synod, are appended for the sake of reference. This does not, however, preclude

future Provincial Synods from making alterations in them, provided they do not clash with general principles.

Compared with former Results, some chapters are considerably shorter, especially those relating to Congregation arrangements; it being agreed on, that each Province should collect, in its own special appendix, such particular regulations relating to itself, as were sanctioned by the General Synod, or left out, as provincial, from the general Results.

LIST OF THE BRETHREN,

Assembled at the Synod of 1857.

A. BISHOPS AND MEMBERS OF THE UNITY'S ELDERS' CONFERENCE.

1. JOHN MARTIN NITSCHMAN, Bishop, President of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
2. CHRISTIAN WILLIAM MATTHIESEN, Bishop, Vice-President of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
3. JOHN CHRISTIAN BREUTEL, Bishop, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
4. HENRY THEODORE DOBER, Bishop, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer at Gnadenfeld, Deputy of the Congregation, and Elders' Conference there.
5. FRANCIS JOACHIM HENRY NIELSEN, Bishop, Society Labourer in St. Petersburg, and Agent of the Congregation at Sarepta.
6. JOHN BALLEIN, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference, and General Agent of the same.
7. CHARLES FREDERIC SCHORDAN, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
8. CHARLES FREDERIC KLUGE, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
9. GODFREY ANDREW CUNOW, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.
10. HENRY RUDOLPH WULLSCHLAEGEL, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.

11. CHARLES WILLIAM JAHN, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference, Deputy of the Elders' Conference at Gnadau, and the Elders' Conference at Sarepta.
12. ERNEST FREDERIC REICHEL, Member of the Unity's Elders' Conference.

B. DEPUTIES.

a. From 15 German Congregations, and Sarepta.

(See No. 4 and 11.)

13. HENRY LEVIN REICHEL, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer at Herrnhut, Deputy of the Continental Provincial Synod of 1856, and of the Elders' Conference at Herrnhut.
14. FRANCIS HERMAN BOURQUIN, Co-Director of the mercantile house of Abraham Dürninger, and Co. at Herrnhut, Deputy of the Congregation there.
15. HENRY FERDINAND MÖSCHLER, Book-keeper of the mercantile house of Abraham Dürninger and Co. at Herrnhut, Deputy of the Congregation there.
16. GUSTAVUS THEODORE TIETZEN, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer at Niesky, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
17. CHARLES WILLIAM FLIEGEL, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer at Kleinwelke, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
18. PETER RAILLARD, Minister, and Labourer of the Married Choir of the Country division at Gnadenfrey, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
19. THEOPHILUS CHRISTLIEB REICHEL, School Director at Gnadenberg, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
20. FELIX EHRHARDT, Warden of the Congregation at Neusalz, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
21. ERNEST LEVIN WÜNSCHE, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer in Berlin, Deputy of the Congregation in Berlin and Rixdorf, and the Elders' Conference there.

22. HERMAN LUDOLPH MENZ, Manager of the Book-concern of the Unity at Gnadau, Deputy of the Congregation there.
23. JOHN RUDOLPH FÜRSTENBERGER, School Director, and Labourer of the Single Brethren's Choir at Ebersdorf, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
24. JOHN GUSTAVUS RENATUS LILLIENDAHL, Merchant at Neudietendorf, Deputy of the Congregation there.
25. EDWARD WENK, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer and School Director at Neudietendorf, Deputy of the Elders' Conference there.
26. ERNEST WILLIAM CRÖGER, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Married Choir Labourer at Neuwied, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
27. GEORGE DAVID CRANZ, Congregation Labourer, Minister, and Labourer of the Married Choir at Königsfeld, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
28. JOHN HENRY LEHMAN, Deputy of the Congregation at Zeist.
29. ANDREW JACOBSEN, Warden of the Congregation at Christiansfeld, Deputy of the Congregation and Elders' Conference there.
30. JOHN LORETZ, Merchant at Sarepta, Deputy of the Congregation there.

b. From British Congregations.

31. SAMUEL RUDOLPH REICHEL, Member of the British Provincial Elders' Conference, and Warden of the Congregation at Ockbrook, Deputy of the British Provincial Elders' Conference, and of the Congregations in Dublin, Ayr, Gracefield, and Kingswood.
32. WILLIAM EDWARDS, Member of the British Provincial Elders' Conference, Congregation Labourer, and Married Choir Labourer at Ockbrook, Deputy of the Congregation there.
33. WILLIAM IGNATIUS OKELY, Deputy of the British Provincial Synod of 1856, and of the Congregations at Bath and Gomersal.

34. EDWARD MOORE, Warden of the Congregation at Fairfield, Deputy of the Congregation there.
35. JOSEPH JACKSON SHAW, Teacher in the Boys' School at Fulneck, Deputy of the Congregation there, and at Leominster.
36. JOSEPH HUTTON WILLEY, School Director at Fulneck, Deputy of the Elders' Conference there.
37. WILLIAM MALLALIEU, Agent of the Missions in London, Deputy of the Congregation there, and of those at Baildon and Dukinfield.
38. JOHN ENGLAND, Congregation Labourer at Bedford, Deputy of the Congregation there.
39. WILLIAM PHILLIPS, Deputy of the Congregation at Bristol.
40. JOHN SMITH, Congregation Labourer, Minister and Married Choir Labourer at Gracehill, Deputy of the Congregation there, and of those at Salem, Devonport, and Kilwarlin.

c. From the North American Congregations.

41. PHILIP HENRY GÖPP, Member of the Provincial Elders' Conference at Bethlehem, Deputy of the same, and of the Provincial Synod of the Northern District.
42. LEWIS KAMPMAN, Labourer of the Congregation at Lancaster, Deputy of the Provincial Synod of the Northern District.
43. EDMUND VON SCHWEINITZ, Labourer of the Congregation in Philadelphia, Deputy of the Provincial Synod for the Northern District.
44. EDWIN TIMOLEON SENSEMAN, Labourer of the Congregation in New York, Deputy of the Provincial Synod of the Northern District.
45. SYLVESTER WOLLE, Director of the Girls' School at Bethlehem, Deputy of the Provincial Synod of the Northern District.
46. LEVIN THEODORE REICHEL, President of the Provincial Elders' Conference, and Congregation Labourer at Salem, and Deputy of the Provincial Synod for the Southern District.
47. SAMUEL THOMAS PFOHL, Warden of the Congregation at Salem, Deputy of the Provincial Synod of the Southern District.

C. OFFICIAL MEMBERS, AND THOSE CALLED BY THE
UNITY'S ELDERS' CONFERENCE.

48. CHARLES WILLIAM JUST, Director of the Office of the Unity's Wardens' College, and Member of the same.
49. LEWIS CHRISTIAN FREDERICK VON SCHWEINITZ, Keeper of the Unity's Archive, and Superintending Editor of the Congregation Accounts.
50. JOHN FOSTER RÖDERER, Director of the Office of the Missions at Herrnhut.
51. CORNELIUS ADOLPHUS RÖMER, Secretary to the Unity's Elders' Conference.
52. FREDERICK THEODORE RIES, Secretary to the Unity's Elders' Conference.
53. PETER LA TROBE, Secretary of the Unity in England.
54. EUGENE ALEXANDER FRÜAUF, Administrator of the Unity's estates in Pennsylvania.
55. EMIL ADOLPH VON SCHWEINITZ, Administrator of the Unity's estates in Wachovia, and also Deputy of the Provincial Elders' Conference for Wachovia.
56. CHARLES MORITZ KÖLBING, Justiciary of Herrnhut, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.
57. HENRY GUSTAVUS FURKEL, Superintendent of the Diaspora in Livonia, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.
58. THOMAS LEOPOLD BADHAM, Co-Secretary of the Missions in London, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.
59. JOHN ADOLPH BONATZ, Warden of the Mission Settlement at Shiloh in South Africa, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.
60. JOHN HENRY BUCHNER, President of the Helpers' Conference for the Mission in Jamaica, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.
61. FREDERICK KLEINER, Warden of the Mission in the Danish West Indies, called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.

CHAPTER I.

BRETHREN'S CONGREGATION : BRETHREN'S CHURCH : BRETHREN'S UNITY.

“Now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” — JOHN xvii. 11, 23.

THE ancient Brethren in Bohemia and Moravia, when they could not obtain what their spiritual wants required from the heads of the Calixtine church in Prague, joined together, in the first instance, as a *Christian association*, with special rules and regulations; afterwards, when the national church had cast them out, they formed a *church constitution* of their own; and finally, in consequence of the persecutions they met with at home, they established new congregations in Poland, which notwithstanding various national peculiarities, still continued to form a *Unity* with the congregations in Bohemia and Moravia, *i.e.* a community intimately united together, by agreement in doctrine, worship, and constitution, under one church-government. In the same manner, through the wonderful Providence of God, *we* first came together as a *Brethren's Congregation*, then obtained the rights and regulations of a *Brethren's Church*, and at length became a *Brethren's Unity*, with wide-spread branches in different countries and quarters of the globe. These three names are, therefore, different designations for one and the same thing, the distinctive meanings of which we learn from history.

§ 1. *Brethren's Congregation.*

From the time of its foundation, in the year 1722, Herrnhut afforded a refuge to Moravian exiles, as well as to other refugees, of various religious persuasions. The earnest desire of these settlers was to work out their own salvation, but they soon differed seriously on articles of doctrine. In

the year 1727, these divisions appeared to have become incurable, and to threaten a total dispersion of the inhabitants. At this critical juncture, when a total dissolution appeared almost inevitable, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ shewed itself mighty to overcome all obstacles. Their divisions were healed by the power of divine love; on the 12th of May, the inhabitants agreed upon certain statutes, as the principles of a Christian and brotherly constitution, and on the 13th of August, the same year, the ever memorable communion in the church at Berthelsdorf, proved the seal of this covenant, and the means of a remarkable baptism of the Spirit, consecrating and uniting them as a congregation of the Lord. This day is justly regarded as the spiritual birthday of the *Brethren's Congregation*.

Without separating from the Protestant church of the country, the inhabitants of Herrnhut now entered into a covenant, having for its object, in the unity of the spirit and in the bond of faith, hope, and charity, to strive to exhibit a living congregation of Jesus, by faithfully observing all his commandments. They called one another Brethren and Sisters, because these scriptural names denote that spiritual union which cements the members of the family of God, of which Jesus is the head, according to his own words: "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Matth. xxiii. 8. This mode of address we will not permit to fall into disuse among us.

For the more ready attainment of the object above-mentioned, they introduced the ancient apostolical discipline and regulations of their fathers in Bohemia and Moravia, and a variety of offices and institutions for the spiritual care, edification, and awakening of souls. They endeavoured so to regulate their domestic and social relations, and their whole civil polity, that they might not only be in conformity with the laws of the land, but in harmony with their main calling as Christians.

The newly formed congregation, now animated with life, felt the inward call to be diffused as a good salt over the earth, to carry on the Lord's work and preach his gospel in all the world, and among all nations, whithersoever he should send them: for where the Lord plants a church for himself, he sets it for a witness to his name before the world, of which we have a living proof in the first apostolic church. (Acts iv. 32, 33.)

The union formed by Count Zinzendorf and his friends at home and abroad, for similar objects, led, in 1732, and the following years, to the first Missions among the Heathen, and these again gave rise to the establishment of colonies in Europe and America. But at the same time, the congregation was intent from the beginning on leading awakened souls in the different Protestant churches, whom a variety of polemical controversies had separated from each other, to the One thing needful, and so carrying into blessed fulfilment the Saviour's prayer (John xvii. 21,) that they all might be *one* in the Father and the Son. (See Chapter XI.)

However short the Brethren's Congregation may, since those early days, have fallen of her high object,—in the first place, to present the living image of a Christian congregation in her own immediate sphere, and then, wherever the Lord opens her a door, to labour to promote the glory of his name, and the union of souls in him,—the features thus originally impressed upon her have never been entirely effaced. What can we desire more than that, by a new revival of the genuine congregation spirit, they might spring forth in renovated youth and beauty!

§ 2. *Brethren's Church.*

The attacks which, shortly after the commencement of the congregation in Herrnhut, were made from various quarters against its constitution, not only promoted its extension, but also led to the procurement of an independent church-constitution by the colonies from Herrnhut, which were founded amongst Christians and heathens. The necessity of supplying the missions and colonies of the Moravian Brethren with regularly ordained ministers, gave occasion, in the year 1735, to the transfer of the episcopal ordination of the ancient Brethren's Church to its reviving branch—the Moravian Brethren's Congregation—by the Senior or Bishop of the Unity of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in Great Poland, Daniel Ernest Jablonsky, first chaplain to the court at Berlin, with the episcopal concurrence of his Co-Senior Sitkovius at Lissa. In this manner, the Brethren's congregation, having determined to maintain the institutions of their fathers, now obtained their ecclesiastical privileges also, and thus the renewal of the ancient Brethren's Church was completed. To the bond of congenial sentiments, and

of living Christianity, that of an outward church-union was now added; for the members of the Brethren's Congregation, as members of the renewed Church of the Brethren, introduced their own ministry and church government. In the year 1745, the various church-degrees of the ancient Brethren, Acoluths, Deacons, and Presbyters, were revived under the Episcopacy.

The appellation of *Renewed Church of the Brethren* includes in it the idea of all those ecclesiastical regulations, rights, and privileges, which have descended to us from the ancient Brethren's Church, and the possession of which is of no small importance, securing to us the recognition of our community as a distinct Christian church, and giving a sanction to all our ecclesiastical transactions. This is of peculiar moment in regard to our congregations in England and North America, where this independent ecclesiastical position alongside of other churches assumed more prominence than on the European Continent. Still, however, the Brethren's Church has never wished to renounce her peculiar spirit and character as a Brethren's *Congregation*. She cherishes as her chief treasure, not the venerable beauty of her ecclesiastical succession and constitution, but that union of heart and life which binds her true members to their Head and to each other. This is at once the spring and the object of her life and activity, the soul of her testimony. Her ecclesiastical independence is the vessel or the instrument which enables her to work with power and freedom, in and out of her own circle, for the attainment of her main object.

§ 3. *Brethren's Unity.*

The name "*Brethren's Unity*" is a more general designation, representing, in a threefold aspect, the union of different elements into one whole. *Unitas Fratrum*, or Unity of Brethren, was the name assumed by the ancient Brethren's Church, because members of different religious parties and of different nationalities were united together in her pale into one whole in Christ.

When the Brethren were acknowledged by the British Parliament, in the year 1749, as a Protestant Episcopal Church, this name came again into use, and it is dear to us on the same account that it was to the ancient Brethren's

Church, because it strikingly denotes our essential characteristic, unity in multiplicity. In the renewed Church of the Brethren, as well as in the old, believers from different communions, especially of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, united with the descendants of the ancient Brethren in *one* covenant of faith and love in Christ. So also, and far more extensively than in the ancient Brethren's Church, this covenant comprises within it individuals of different nations and languages, all of whom, however, desire, as Brethren and Sisters in Christ, to be one according to his testament, and to form a *Unity of Brethren*. This is the *first* and most important meaning of this term.

But again, inasmuch as one independent and regular Church-constitution unites the different parts of our Brotherly covenant in Europe and America into a whole, we call ourselves also in this *second* and *ecclesiastical* sense, a *Unity*. It is true, our church regulations vary, according to circumstances, in the different branches of our communion, and differences in minor points of doctrine are allowed; (see Chap. XI.) But as this does not affect our fellowship of spirit, it does not disturb our ecclesiastical unity; for our church stands fast as a unity on the confession of Christ and him crucified, as the foundation of all our teaching, and knows from experience that this is sufficient for all her wants.

And finally, in proof that this unity is indeed a living one, her members have ever been ready, after the example of the apostolic churches, (compare Acts ii. and iv. with 2 Cor. viii. and ix.) to contribute by their donations, or by the labour of their hands, to the general necessities of the church, or of individual congregations. In this *third* signification of the word, also, we desire to be a *Unity*, to form *one* people or *one* family; and experience has taught us what a blessing rests on this intercourse of charity, both within each province and in respect to the church at large.

Our main concern, however, as members of the Brethren's Unity is, to strive that we all may be *one* in whatever is essential to salvation, and may be truly members of that one body of which Christ is the Head. May our confession ever be that of the Apostle: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Not as though I had already attained, either were already

perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Then shall we also, in conformity with our character as a Unity, obey the exhortation: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. iii. 8, 12, 15, 16.)

CHAPTER II.

DOCTRINE AND MINISTRY.

"Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."—2 TIM. i. 13, 14; see 1 TIM. vi. 3—5.

A. DOCTRINE.*

§ 4. *Standard of Doctrine.*

THE Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are and remain the only rule of our faith and practice. We revere them as the word of God, which he spake to mankind, in time past by the prophets, and in these last days by his Son and his apostles, to instruct them in the way of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

We are convinced, that all truth needful to be known and believed by one who is anxious for his soul's salvation, is fully contained in these Divine records.

§ 5. *Mysteries of Scripture.*

We firmly adhere to the characteristic mode of thinking of our Church, that it is not for us to define what Scripture has left undefined, or to contend about mysteries which are impenetrable to human understanding; such, for example, as

* On the relation of the Brethren's Church to other Protestant churches and the Augsburg Confession, see Chapter XI.

the mystery of the Holy Trinity and the Sacraments. While, on the one hand, we would steadily keep in view the mark which the apostle Paul sets before us, (Eph. iv. 13, 14,) "that we may all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we be henceforth no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine;" we would, on the other hand, never forget, that every human system of divine truth must remain imperfect, as the same apostle says, (1 Cor. xiii. 9,) "we know in part."

§ 6. *Summary of Doctrine.*

We regard every truth revealed to us in the word of God as an invaluable treasure, and sincerely believe that the loss of life itself would be a trifling evil compared with the denial of any one of them. But most especially is this the case with that truth which the Renewed Church of the Brethren has ever regarded as her chief doctrine, an inestimable jewel which by God's grace she still holds fast:—

"That whoe'er believeth in Christ's redemption,
May find free grace, and a complete exemption
From serving sin." (See 1 John ii. 2.)

From this great truth we deduce the following points of doctrine most essential to salvation:—

a. The doctrine of *the total depravity of human nature*,—that there is no health in us,—and that, since the fall, we have no power left to help ourselves.

b. The doctrine of *the love of God the Father*, who "has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world," and who "so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

c. The doctrine of *the real Godhead and real manhood of Jesus Christ*;—that God, the Creator of all things, was manifested in the flesh, and has reconciled the world unto himself,—that "he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

d. The doctrine of *the atonement and satisfaction of Jesus Christ for us*;—that he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification;" and that in his merits alone we find forgiveness of sins and peace with God.

e. The doctrine of *the Holy Ghost and his gracious operations*;—that it is he who works in us the knowledge of sin, faith in Jesus, and the witness that we are children of God.

f. The doctrine of *the fruits of faith*;—that it must shew itself as an active principle, by a willing obedience to God's commandments, flowing from love and gratitude.

§ 7. *Centre of Doctrine.*

In conformity with these fundamental articles of our faith, the great theme of our preaching is Jesus Christ our Saviour, he who says of the Scriptures:—"They are they which testify of me,"—"in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen,"—in whom we have the grace of the Son, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. The word of the cross, *i.e.* the testimony of his voluntary offering of himself to suffer and to die, and of the treasures of grace purchased thereby, is the beginning, middle, and end of our ministry, and to proclaim the Lord's death we regard as the main calling of the Brethren's Church. We point to him as "made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Hence we maintain, that while the law of God is given us for the knowledge of sin, we are led to true contrition of spirit by the testimony which the Holy Ghost bears more especially to our want of faith in Jesus, and our indifference to the Saviour who hung upon the cross for us. (John xvi. 8, 9. Acts ix. 5.) The look at his agonizing death shews us the merited curse and condemnation under which we lie by nature, but at the same time reveals the sole ground of justification before God, reconciliation with him, and deliverance from the power of death and from our vain conversation, so that the conscience is "purged from dead works to serve the living God."

§ 8. *The Way of Salvation.*

It has been the earnest desire of our Church from the beginning, and must continue to be so, that each individual member of it should be led, in the school of the Holy Ghost, to a deep and thorough knowledge, not only of his sinfulness, but of his exposure to condemnation before God as the de-

sert of sin, and so be brought to genuine repentance and to the conviction of his need of a Saviour; whence will result, through living faith in Jesus, a thorough renewal of the inward man, consisting, not in the laying aside of this or the other sinful habit, but in an entire change of views and dispositions, and in a full surrender of the heart to the Lord;—a change effected, not by legal self-working, but solely by the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit.

Both Scripture and experience indicate a great diversity in the ways by which God leads souls to salvation. Hence, while some can state the day or hour when the decisive change took place within them, there are others in whom the development of the spiritual life advances very gradually. Yet in every case the new birth must manifest itself by a constant growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, by zeal in following after holiness, by a loathing of sin, and a continual sorrow on account of our sinfulness, by daily repentance and resort to the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and by a joyful “hope of the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. i. 13.) Hence follows the necessity for the pardoned sinner to maintain an uninterrupted, confidential intercourse with our Saviour, according to his own words: “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” (John xv. 4.) Thus true sanctification of soul and body, and a transformation into the Saviour’s image, are wrought within us, not legally but evangelically; and the work is cherished in humility, and maintained and ripened more and more for the perfect state, by a constant looking unto Jesus, and to all the merits of his holy life. The pardoned sinner, who has received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry “Abba Father,” will call the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ *his* Father also; and in the blessed assurance that neither death nor life shall separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, he will have, already here, his “conversation in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” (Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

§ 9. *The Christian Life.*

Our great and only Master comprises the whole doctrine of Christian morality, according to its inmost spirit, in the commandment of love to God and to our neighbour. After His example and that of His apostles, we will be careful to remind one another of all those Christian virtues which flow therefrom, and which adorn the character of a true child of God. We will especially enforce the importance of strict conscientiousness in our whole conduct, and raise a warning voice against every species of vice and immorality. Yet all our warnings and exhortations must not only have reference to Jesus as our all-perfect example, but be in close accordance with the doctrine of faith, insisting, according to our Lord's direction, that the tree must first be made good, in order that it may bring forth good fruit. Only by insincere souls, and from a light-minded view of the great mysteries of godliness, can the doctrine of the atonement be abused as an opiate for a guilty conscience and a cloke for sin, or as a discouragement to earnest endeavours for increasing sanctification. The true believer, on the contrary, finds, with Paul, in the free-will offering of the Son of God, and in his death on the cross, both the strongest motives and the most effectual power to cast off the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, (Rom. xiii. 11—13,) to die with Christ unto sin, and to live unto righteousness, (Rom. vi. 11—13,) and to "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 1—11.)

B. MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

§ 10. *Public Ministry.*

In a teacher of God's Word it is especially required, that he should have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, and should seek, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, to penetrate more and more deeply into their meaning, and submit his own heart to the power of divine truth, so that the words of Paul may be increasingly verified in him: "The love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. v. 14.) Before any brother is appointed to assist or take part in the public proclamation of the Gospel, it should be ascertained by a careful examination, that he possesses the requisite qualifications of head and heart.

The most important part of a minister's preparation for a discourse is prayer and application of the subject to himself; for an address that is prompted by heartfelt conviction, and marked by a warm and lively interest in the subject, will make the deepest impression on the hearts of others. "In order to preach aright," says Count Zinzendorf, "three looks are needful before each sermon—one into the depth of thine own misery, another into the depth of human misery around thee, and the third into the depth of the love of God in Christ; that, emptied of self, and filled with compassion for thy fellow-sinners, thou mayest be able to communicate the consolations of God to the hearts of men."

Our discourses should explain the Scripture, and apply it to the heart; they should be instructive, doctrinal, well-digested and arranged; not with "enticing words of man's wisdom," but with demonstration of that power which lodges in the words taught by the Holy Spirit, and stored up for our use in the book of divine revelation. (1 Cor. ii. 1—4.)

An ambassador in Christ's stead must not shun declaring to his hearers all the counsel of God; he must endeavour "rightly to divide the word of truth," with especial reference to the festivals of the Christian Church, and the spiritual necessities and circumstances of his hearers, both believers and unbelievers; and "as a scribe, instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, bring forth out of his treasure things new and old," and by the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit lead souls into *all* truth. He must never forget that he stands as a sinner in the midst of sinners, needing mercy and forgiveness as well as they. He must pray for the unction from above, that he may warn *aright* and comfort *aright*, and not close the hearts of his hearers against him by his reproofs, or foster a spirit of sloth instead of earnest diligence, or of self-complacent judging of others instead of penitence and holy joy.

While in our public preaching we dwell on the fundamental truths of Christianity, which it is necessary for all to know, we have in our discourses to the congregation and its several choirs, to pay special regard to their peculiar circumstances and relations, and to apply the words of Scripture accordingly. We will also be careful to remind each other of our Saviour's aim in uniting us together as a distinct community; and the contemplation of the great things which he has done for us, ought to fill our souls with gratitude to him,

and love to that household of faith into which he has been pleased to call us. Nor will we forget to add the caution, that an outward participation in these blessed privileges does not make us true members of the Church of Christ, and to admonish each one individually to examine himself in the presence of the Lord, as to whether, through grace, he has made his calling and election sure, and has a well grounded hope of salvation.

§ 11. *Family Worship.*

The effect of our preaching should be, to excite our hearers to search the Scriptures for themselves, and to draw living water from these well-springs of divine knowledge. We consider it a sacred duty to promote an acquaintance with the Scriptures amongst all connected with us, by every means in our power. Parents should make the first beginning with their children. Mindful of the deep and lasting impressions which Bible narratives, from the lips of pious mothers, have made on the tender minds of their children, we would earnestly entreat all mothers in our congregations, not to neglect this most important and delightful duty, the discharge of which will, we may reasonably hope, be so blessed by the Lord, that, as we read of young Timothy, (2 Tim. i. 5,) the unfeigned faith, and the love to the Redeemer, which dwell in them, may be implanted, take root, and grow in the hearts of their children and children's children.

This seed of the divine word, sown in the tender hearts of children, is best nurtured by means of family worship, and the morning and evening devotions, which are usual in our schools and choir houses. The use of our Text-book, the reading of one or more chapters of the Bible, and prayer or singing, will aid in raising the heart in fellowship to the throne of grace. The particular form observed is of secondary importance.

The *daily texts* just referred to, with the verses subjoined by way of application, which, in various languages, are used in our whole Brethren's Unity, and which are also spread more widely every year, not without blessing, amongst thousands beyond our circle, remind us daily of our union in the Lord with all our Brethren and Sisters in all parts of the earth. ~~It will be our endeavour still further to enlarge the selection of texts for comfort, exhortation, and warning.~~

In our *Schools* and educational institutions, we will continue to make our children acquainted with Bible-history, in hours set apart for this purpose, and in a manner suitable to their age. Besides these important lessons, we endeavour, in another part of their religious instruction, to explain to them the principal truths of Christianity, catechetically, and in as plain, attractive, and impressive a manner as possible. A store of the leading texts of Scripture, committed to memory by our children, will prove a fund that will yield ample interest for their whole future lives.

The elder boys and girls should receive regular instruction at least once a week, and, in the case of the former, the time should be so fixed that their engagements with their masters may not prevent their attendance.

When a brother who has the charge of such an instruction-meeting, is prevented from attending to it for a length of time, a substitute should, if possible, be appointed.

For the same object—the instruction of youth in the Holy Scriptures—Sunday Schools have been established in our English and American congregations.

§ 12. *Conclusion.*

We would implore the Lord to grant, that the relish for reading and hearing the word of God may continue to increase among us, and that both the public discourses and the Bible readings and expositions introduced into all our congregations, as well as the meetings in the choir houses of the single Brethren for reading and conversing on the Holy Scriptures, under the direction of the Choir Labourer, may yield continually richer blessing. May he teach young and old to satisfy the deepest wants of their hearts from the fountain of all life, and, by his Spirit and his Word, testify with power and efficacy of that which alone can make us happy! May he raise up in his congregation many faithful shepherds and evangelists, and “create the fruit of the lips,” and bless our whole Brethren’s Unity with the fulfilment of his promise: “I will set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” (Isa. lxii. 6, 7.)

CHAPTER III.

RITUAL OF THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH.

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.”—Ps. xxvii. 4.

Introduction.

OUR Ritual, under which term are comprised all the arrangements for public and private worship, is distinguished by its fulness and variety; the union of which features may be considered a leading characteristic of the Brethren's Church. Entire uniformity as regards every point cannot be expected in the different provinces of the Unity and their respective congregations: but the substantial agreement which exists certainly constitutes one of the strongest bonds of union in our Church. The Synod therefore resolved anew to uphold and preserve, as far as possible, this existing agreement in all arrangements connected with our Ritual.

A. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO THE RITUAL.

§ 13. *Diversity of Forms.*

The variety of modes in which the Liturgical spirit of the Brethren's Congregation finds its expression, offers ample means for satisfying the desire for edification, and at the same time furnishes the members of the Congregation with an abundant supply of all that is needed for comfort and support, warning and admonition. Whilst it is the aim of all our liturgical arrangements to make provision from the treasures of God's word for the due instruction and training of all in the verities of the Christian faith, at the same time we have particular regard to their application to the different relations and circumstances of human life. We would thus bring together in close union the knowledge of the truth, and that change of heart and elevation of character which ought ever to result from it.

The spirit of a living congregation of Christ must be

felt in all our Church services, and these services should be the means of imparting new life day by day to each member of the Church. The religion of the heart must be the life of all our solemn assemblies; and that so much the more, in as far as the overpowering visitations of grace, vouchsafed by the Lord to the Brethren's Church in the earliest period of her renewed existence, have taught us to believe that spiritual blessings are not only a matter for private and individual enjoyment, as is too commonly supposed, but can be and ought to be realized by believers in the fellowship of their solemn assemblies.

Our liturgical regulations must never be allowed to become a dead letter, and to degenerate into cold and lifeless forms. On the contrary, it is to be regarded as one of the excellencies of the Brethren's Church, that she reserves to herself the liberty of altering and amending her ritual as circumstances may require.

§ 14. *Alterations—in how far allowable.*

The brother who conducts a service must be allowed the liberty of deviating from the usual order in unimportant points, if he feels prompted in spirit to do so. Thus he may introduce a prayer, or read a portion of Scripture, and the like, in agreement with the apostolic direction, "Quench not the Spirit." (1 Thess. v. 19.) At the same time he must have regard to the spirit of the congregation, and always bear in mind, that in case of alterations of importance, as for instance in the time and order of the services, the congregation has a right to be consulted. For no blessing could rest upon a change, if carried out by a labourer contrary to the wish of a congregation, merely on the strength of his own conviction of its propriety.

Essential changes in the arrangements of our Ritual can only be effected by authority of the whole Church, inasmuch as the Ritual is the expression of its inner life. Such alterations require the express sanction of a General or Provincial Synod, according as they have a bearing on the resolutions of a General Synod or not. Hence it is totally inadmissible for individual congregations to abandon forms peculiar to our Ritual, and borrow usages from other churches, merely for the sake of assimilating ourselves to them.

§ 15. *Church Fellowship.*

A simplicity which speaks to the heart should characterize all our services. Their usefulness depends on the unction from above, and on the cordial interest taken by the congregation in what forms the subject of discourse, singing, or prayer; in short, in all that is done in the Lord's name.

In order to awaken, as far as in us lies, a general interest in our beautiful services, it is of the greatest consequence that they be not conducted with formality. The servants of the congregation, whose office it is to conduct the services, should make it a subject of heartfelt concern to render them lively and impressive, both for heart and mind. If they are themselves imbued with the spirit of the sanctuary, and are borne in prayer upon the hearts of the congregation, whenever they stand forth to minister to the edification of their congregations by singing, by prayer, or by exhortation; if they rightly apprehend the character of each class of services, and of each festive celebration, and can inspire their hearers with the same appreciation of them, they will be successful in gathering around them all who feel their need of real edification.

It is true that no ritual arrangements, however excellent, will avail to produce an increased relish for the services of the Lord's house, where there is a want of spiritual life in the members of the congregation. Nevertheless, as these services are the blessed means appointed for awakening and sustaining that life, we earnestly and affectionately call on all our brethren and sisters to beware lest they suffer themselves, either by indolence and indifference, or by a too eager pursuit of the things of time and sense, to be deprived of the spiritual nourishment which is thus provided for their souls. All the labourers in a congregation should regard it as their duty to set a good example in this respect, and never to absent themselves from a meeting without necessity; and it would be well if all the brethren and sisters in a congregation, who have realized in their own experience the blessedness of frequenting the house of God, would unite together not only to be diligent in their attendance themselves, but also by friendly admonition to promote the same practice among others, so as gradually to draw greater numbers, and, if possible, the whole congregation, into the same mutual agreement, that so we may realize in increasing measure those elevating enjoyments which flow from Christian fellowship.

B. GENERAL CHURCH SERVICES.

§ 16. *The Lord's Day.*

The Lord's day and its observance demand our first attention. We read, in Genesis ii. 2, 3, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." On this divine ordinance was grounded the law of the Old Testament, in which God commanded his people to abstain from all earthly labour on the seventh day of the week, and to sanctify it to the Lord. (Exod. xx. 8—11.) The solemn observance of the Lord's day in the Christian Church rests on this twofold divine testimony, combined with the completion of the new creation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost. It is therefore set apart as a day of rest, and consecrated to the service of the Lord. On it man ought to seek, not only to gain renewed vigour of mind and body for the prosecution of his earthly labour, and the promotion of his temporal and eternal well-being, but, above all, to raise his thoughts to God, and to feed upon the Bread of Heaven.

The Sunday is therefore to be regarded as the weekly memorial of the redemption effected by Jesus Christ. It is a day especially deserving our respect and veneration, and ought to be hallowed by us as the Lord's day, not only by a diligent attendance on the public preaching of the Word of God—that is, the word of reconciliation, which on this day more especially should ever be proclaimed, but also by making a faithful use of it, as a day given to us for quiet meditation and for building ourselves up on our most holy faith. It is therefore highly censurable if on this day amusements are indulged in, which interfere with edification and attendance on divine worship. Remembering, moreover, that it is our bounden duty to have regard not only to ourselves, but also to the congregation of which we are members, and to our fellow-men in general; bearing in mind likewise that the observance of the Lord's day as a day of rest is, in several countries, enforced by legal enactments, it is the more incumbent upon us to declare, that the carrying on amongst us of handicraft business or labour on this day is wholly inad-

missible. It is the duty of the congregation conferences to watch over the strict observance of this rule.

The character and importance of the Lord's day should be impressed upon the minds of our children from their earliest years. Hence they should, as soon as their age permits, be taken to the public services by their parents or teachers, or if too young for this, they should attend the children's meeting, or the Sunday school.

Any more specific regulations which may be requisite, regarding the observance of the Lord's day in our several congregations, are left to the Provincial Synods. But we must still add the exhortation applicable to all, not to neglect, but carefully and devoutly to attend the praying of the Litany, which forms so suitable a commencement of the Lord's day services, and ought no where to be omitted.

§ 17. *General Church Festivals.*

But the Christian Church not only calls to mind the work of mankind's redemption every Lord's day, but has recommended the special commemoration of the principal events connected with it. Hence the series of festive days and seasons, the subjects of which embrace the whole counsel of God for man's salvation, and which run through the former half of our ecclesiastical year. The love of God the Father, who gave his only begotten Son for us, forms the subject of our Advent and Christmas meditations; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, occupies our minds during the Lent and Easter season until Ascension-day; the communion of the Holy Ghost is the theme of our contemplations at Whitsuntide; and Trinity Sunday closes the series with a grateful retrospect of all that divine mercy has done for our salvation. Though these Church Festivals are not celebrated in precisely the same way in all our congregations, yet in every instance, the celebration is calculated, we trust, to reach the heart, and thus to afford a rich spiritual feast, not only to our own Church members, but also to visiting friends.

§ 18. *The Sacraments.*

Intimately connected with the consideration of those wonderful acts whereby God redeemed a sinful race, and with the divine command to appropriate them to ourselves with a believing mind, stands the celebration of the Sacraments, those divinely instituted means of grace by which we may be grounded and established in faith, hope, and love. These are Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; between which the Christian Church has interposed the rite of Confirmation, as a ratification of the baptismal covenant, and an introduction to the enjoyment of the Lord's Supper.

§ 19. *Holy Baptism.*

Inasmuch as our children, by their birth in the Christian Church, are called by the Lord to participate in the blessings of the Gospel dispensation, (1 Cor. vii. 14,) and Christ himself blessed little children and declared, that of such was the kingdom of heaven, we consider it to be the duty of parents to bring their infants to be baptized as soon as circumstances permit.

The congregation in which the baptism takes place should give evidence, by their presence at the solemn rite, that they participate in the obligation which the parents of the child have undertaken, to bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Baptisms, therefore, are to be performed with befitting solemnity, ordinarily in a public meeting of the congregation, which the children especially should attend. They afford an excellent opportunity for reminding all present of the covenant into which they were individually admitted by this sacred rite, and of the answer of a good conscience towards God which it represents.

Only such persons as are capable of appreciating the meaning and importance of the rite, can be allowed to stand as witnesses or sponsors. ~~Their number should not exceed five, but may be less.~~ Although no legal responsibility is laid upon the individuals who undertake this office, to care for the well-being of the children at whose baptism they are witnesses, they should acknowledge the obligation as one of Christian love, and consider such children as objects of their peculiar intercession, as well as of their affectionate solicitude in the event of their becoming orphans.

§ 20. *Confirmation.*

The age requisite for confirmation cannot be precisely fixed; it is, however, recommended not to proceed too hastily in this matter. A preparatory course of instruction, embracing a general view of Christian doctrine, and an examination as regards its leading points, is indispensable. The confirmation is to be held with the solemnity due to the great importance of this rite. In the presence of the Lord and of the assembled congregation, the candidates are expected to profess their belief in the Triune God. This may be done most advantageously by a short catechization, after which they are blessed with imposition of hands.

A register of confirmations is to be kept as an appendix to the Church-book, from which the requisite certificates of confirmation may be extracted.

§ 21. *The Lord's Supper.*

The holy Communion will continue to be celebrated in the manner which has so long obtained among us, and which has approved itself as a blessed means of grace to so many hearts. It was likewise concluded to retain the kiss of peace, as a token of brotherly love, and of the renewal of our covenant with each other, grounded on our Saviour's death, wherever this usage, derived from the Apostolic church, can be observed with blessing. (Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Peter v. 14.) Where objections to the practice exist, the giving of the hand is recommended instead of it.

As regards the time for this solemnity, no rule can be laid down applicable to all congregations: whether it shall be celebrated on Saturday or Sunday is left to the decision of the Elders' Conferences or Labourers, in conjunction with their congregations. The present Synod, like its predecessors, expressed itself in favour of the monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper, wherever the usage has existed hitherto.

The frequent enjoyment of this blessed ordinance is felt by our brethren and sisters in general to be essential to their spiritual life, and will, we trust, continue to be a means of grace for the strengthening and nourishing of the soul, affording us on each occasion new opportunity and stimulus for self-examination, and for the confirmation of our union with the Lord and with each other. At the same time it

must be left optional to every one to partake less frequently, according to his individual conviction and state of heart, and none ought ever to approach the Lord's table under the influence of improper motives, such as mere custom, desire of reputation, or fear of discredit. (We would respect the conscientiousness which induces a communicant to forego his privilege, when he considers himself in an unfit state of heart for the participation.) But where a member habitually neglects this enjoyment, either from indifference, from uncharitable and hostile feelings towards any one, or from other impure motives, his conduct is to be regarded, not as faithfulness towards himself, but as unfaithfulness towards his Saviour.

The holy Communion is to be administered to the sick, at their express request, where the nature of the illness will allow of it.

Regarding the admission of strangers to this ordinance as guests, no rule can be laid down which will apply to every particular case. As a general principle the permission must be limited to such persons as stand in close spiritual union with the Brethren's Church.

The preparatory discourse and the thanksgiving Liturgy ought not to be neglected by the communicants.

§ 22. *Marriage.*

Marriages among our Church members are to be solemnized according to the formularies drawn up for the respective Provinces. Ministers are to be recommended, in their address to the parties about to enter into this solemn engagement, to direct them very seriously to consider the importance of such a step, and the reciprocal duties connected with it, as set forth and enjoined in holy writ.

§ 23. *Funerals.*

The Funerals of our departed brethren and sisters present an opportunity not to be neglected, for bringing to bear upon our transitory passage through time, the light of the eternity towards which we are advancing.

A memoir of the deceased, or the knowledge which the labourer may have acquired of his spiritual course and experience, may give occasion to extol the riches of divine

grace, as well as to warn, to comfort, and to strengthen the faith of the believer. Vain panegyric, however, and rigorous censure, are alike out of place in a funeral discourse. The Synod repeats the earnest wish, that our brethren and sisters would not neglect to record, in the form of a memoir, the instructive experiences which they may have made during the progressive stages of their natural and spiritual life. Thus, even after death, they may prove the means of abiding blessing to many a soul.

The grave-stones in our burial grounds, and the inscriptions on them, should be distinguished by simplicity and uniformity. Every inscription, therefore, before it is engraved, should be shewn to the minister for his approval.

C. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS AND FESTIVALS.

§ 24. *Memorial Days.*

We gladly join in celebrating the Church Festivals generally observed in the different countries of Christendom, and the days set apart by Government for public humiliation or thanksgiving.

Of the particular Memorial days of the Brethren's Unity, the 13th of August and the 13th of November are celebrated as congregation-festivals: the others may be noticed in the ordinary evening-service. The narratives of the occurrences thus celebrated, should from time to time be communicated to the congregations, either before or on the day of the festival.

Each congregation has, besides, its own anniversary festival, on which its members gratefully commemorate the special mercies which the Lord has vouchsafed to them.

The solemnities of the 16th of September, the festival of the Servants of the congregations, who on this occasion covenant anew with each other before the Lord, to shew faithfulness in the service allotted to them, are attended by the members of the Elders' Conferences of the Unity and of the congregations, by the Labourers of town and country congregations, and by the brethren and sisters engaged in service at the Mission stations. It affords an excellent opportunity for the servants of the congregation to call to mind the importance of their high and holy calling, as well as the defects which have marked their service; while, at the same time, the congregations may be reminded of the

duty of faithful intercession on behalf of those who minister to them.

§ 25. *Prayer-Meetings.*

Our opportunities for mutual edification are not, however, confined to Sundays and festival days, but, following the example of the early Christians, who "continued daily with one accord in the temple," (Acts ii. 46,) we have week-day assemblies for worship, as far as practicable. And in these meetings the spiritual food is not restricted to an address, but includes devotional exercises of prayer and praise, in which the whole congregation can join.

Although the original practice of dividing the twenty-four hours of the day for this purpose has been discontinued, there exist arrangements at the present day, which, by the divine blessing, may prove the means of arousing the lukewarm and slothful to renewed zeal and faithfulness in prayer.

In the public *prayer-meetings*, which are held in most of our congregations on the first Monday of the month, in fellowship of spirit with many other children of God, we bring before the Lord in prayer not only the wants and necessities of the Church generally, but in particular the great work of the Lord in heathen lands, especially that part of it which has been committed to the Brethren's Church; the progress and success of which will be essentially furthered by the faithful prayers of a congregation.

Both public meetings of the whole or part of a congregation, under the presidency of the Labourers, and assemblies of a less formal stamp for social or private devotion, may be employed with profit for keeping alive and increasing the spirit of prayer. These latter, if conducted in a simple and unostentatious manner, in the spirit of love to Christ and to the Brethren, and in reliance on our Saviour's promise, (Matt. xviii. 19,) are in perfect accordance with the spirit of the Brethren's Church.

May the spirit of prayer and supplication never depart from us; but, besides the worship of the general assembly in the house of God, may a band of praying souls be found in every congregation, who, unnoticed by men, but known to the Lord, have "this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (1 John v. 14.)

§ 26. *Singing-Meetings.*

Our Singing meetings and Liturgies are a valuable and characteristic feature of our worship. When, on such occasions, verses are sung by the assembled congregation, in which our Christian forefathers have described the ground of their faith and the experience of their hearts, and when both lip and heart make melody to praise the Lord and to extol his mercy, even those who are yet strangers to the Christian life cannot but feel something of a devotional spirit excited within them.

Care should be taken that our children and youth store their memories, not only with important texts of holy writ, but likewise with our beautiful hymns, that, as has been the case with others in innumerable instances, they may have, in this treasured store, what will prove an abiding blessing to them under the varying circumstances and vicissitudes of human life.

Our *Liturgical services* should be conducted with befitting solemnity, and such parts as are peculiarly expressive of feelings of devotion may suitably be sung kneeling.

Our *Love-feasts*, which are derived from the Agapæ of the primitive Christian Church, remind us in a pleasing manner of the family bond which unites us as Brethren and Sisters in our common love to Jesus, and tend to enliven, in no ordinary degree, our festival solemnities. When they precede the holy communion, they aid in producing collectedness of mind, and preparation for the sacred feast.

The *cup of covenant*, a usage of the Brethren's Church, which has its origin in the dividing of the cup at the commencement of the Passover, and which our Lord himself observed previous to his partaking of the Passover for the last time with his disciples, (Luke xxii. 17,) must not be confounded with the cup in the holy communion. It is intended for those who stand in bonds of union with each other, as members of the congregation or its choirs, or as those who are engaged in the service of the church, or in the instruction or care of youth; and has respect to the particular covenant, into which the participants mutually enter at the time, the nature of which must determine the question, who are to be admitted to the service on any particular occasion.

§ 27. *Church Music.*

A style of Music and musical performances, consistent with the true spirit of the congregation, contributes in no small degree to give to our religious services a pleasing and harmonious character. The influence of music upon the devotional feelings and edification of the congregation should never be lost sight of; and while a too artificial style is to be deprecated, as distracting the attention of the hearers, however beautiful and sublime the composition may be, care should be taken to place our musical performances under a wise control, and a direction consonant with the real character of our church.

It is recommended with regard to the services in which anthems are introduced, that only such compositions shall be selected as are distinguished as well by noble simplicity as by their real beauty, and are calculated to promote edification and a devotional spirit. It is the duty of Labourers to commit the direction of the music to brethren qualified for the charge by their knowledge and correct feeling.

As regards the Psalmody of the Church, it behoves us to exercise great caution lest our own tunes, which are so beautifully suited to the character of our hymns, be supplanted by those of a different style derived from other communities. Accordingly, the Synod recommends, in order to preserve our congregational tunes in their purity, that only such tunes be made use of in our meetings as are to be found in our published collection. We shall do well to endeavour to produce a relish for our own psalmody in the minds of our children by suitable exercises in singing. But more particularly is it to be viewed as the duty of young brethren, who are training for service in our church, not only to store their minds with an ample fund of hymns, but likewise to become well versed in our tunes; and thus to cultivate that musical talent which at a future day they will have to employ for the advantage and edification of the congregation.

§ 28. *Hymn-Book.*

The German Hymn-book, from which many beautiful old hymns have been transferred into the collections which are in use in other provinces of the Unity, remains precisely in the same form in which it appeared on the publication of the

first edition in the year 1778. Thousands both without and within the pale of the Brethren's Unity, have made use of this collection for the purpose of public as well as of private devotion, and have found that the hymns contained in it, express, in the most forcible manner, their holiest and happiest feelings, and the strongest convictions, and the most varied experiences of their hearts.

In consequence of the practice of singing from memory, without the use of the Hymn-book, the Hymnology of our Church is endeared from childhood to the members of our German congregations, inasmuch as it has been found to give utterance to the feelings of the inmost soul. Hence it will excite no surprise that, from many of these congregations, an earnest request was again forwarded to the Synod, that no change might be made in the Hymn-book at present in use.

Since the last Synod, an extract of the larger Hymn-book has been published for the use of the American congregations, and has answered the purpose of making our brethren and sisters in that province better acquainted with the hymns of our Church. The English Hymn-book, in use in our British and American congregations, has appeared in an improved edition, in 1849; and new and improved editions of the French and Swedish Hymn-books are in course of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCH OFFICES AND ORDINATIONS IN THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH.

- “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”—1 TIM. iv. 14.
 “I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.”—2 TIM. i. 6.

§ 29. *Service of the Church.*

THE ministry of the Protestant Church of the Brethren, by which she enjoys an undisputed independent sphere of

activity in the kingdom of God, rests on the appointment and ordination of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Ordination, which among us is conferred by bishops only, is required by those who administer the word and sacraments, to give authority for all church transactions. As every ordination is accompanied by the believing prayers of the assembled congregation to the Head of the Church, and by the laying on of hands in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we consider it as a means of conveying special divine blessing to those who receive the important charge, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

§ 30. *Episcopal Ordination.*

Our episcopal ordination is derived from the ancient Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, and prized by us as a valuable inheritance. It was preserved by that venerable Church amidst many heavy trials and bloody persecutions, and even when she appeared to be extinct, in hope against hope; and, at length, when the time for her renewal had arrived, it was transmitted to our fathers. This is the link which more immediately connects us with the ancient Brethren's Church, and constitutes our title to be called "the renewed Church of the Brethren." "It is," as Count Zinzendorf once observed, "a treasure committed to our keeping, of which nothing but unfaithfulness can deprive us." Yet the episcopacy of the renewed Church of the Brethren has, from its beginning, differed in import from that of the ancient Church. In the latter, the government of the Church was in the hands of the bishops, who had their separate dioceses, and, with the occasional assistance of the Synods, cared for the oversight and direction of the whole Church. In the renewed Brethren's Church, for some time before the introduction of Episcopacy, the government of the Church had been committed to elders, chosen by the congregation. It was the want of properly ordained ministers which alone gave occasion for the introduction of episcopal ordination, without leading to any change in the existing government of the Church. This peculiar arrangement has continued till the present time, and the Synod did not find it advisable to make any alteration.

§ 31. *Office of Bishop.*

From the foregoing we deduce the principles which are to guide us in future.

1. Our episcopacy (bishop's office) in itself gives to the individual who holds it no title to a share in the government of the Brethren's Church, or of any individual congregation.

2. No bishop is, as such, subordinate to another.

3. A bishop has no diocese committed to his jurisdiction. ~~At the same time, circumstances may render it desirable to consecrate, as bishops, such brethren as are engaged in the superintendence of the whole Church, or of a province; hence the presidents of the different Provincial Elders' Conferences have generally been bishops.~~

4. A bishop, like every other servant of the Unity, must receive a special appointment to any office which he holds, from the Synod, or the Unity's Elders' Conference, or a Provincial Elders' Conference.

5. Ordinations to the different Church-degrees can be performed only by virtue of an express commission from the above-mentioned authorities.

§ 32. *Ordination.*

The consecration of Bishops usually takes place at General Synods, but if circumstances render it necessary during the interval between two Synods, the Unity's Elders' Conference is empowered to provide for it. The ordination of presbyters and deacons is fixed by the Unity's Elders' Conference, or the Provincial Elders' Conferences. When a bishop cannot officiate in person at the ordination of a deacon, the rite is to be performed, if possible, by a presbyter, who is to act by virtue of an express commission given by the bishop. The transaction is to take place in a public meeting, when a written ordination, prepared by the bishop, is to be read, accompanied by imposition of hands on the part of the presbyter. The sanction of the lot is, as a general rule, required for brethren set apart for episcopal consecration by the Synod or Unity's Elders' Conference. (See Chap. V. § 43.)

§ 33. *Bishops now living.*

Ten Bishops have been called home by the Lord since the last Synod. There are at present twelve bishops of the Brethren's Church, viz.—the brethren Andrew Benade, John Martin Nitschmann, Christian Conrad Ultsch, Peter Wolle, Benjamin Seifferth, Christian William Matthiesen, Francis Joachim Henry Nielsen, John Rogers, John Christian Breutel, Henry Theodore Dober, George Wall Westerby, Christian Jacobsen. During the present Synod, the brethren Godfrey Andrew Cunow, William Edwards, Charles William Jabn, and Henry Rudolph Wullschlaegel, were chosen, and approved by lot, to be bishops of the Brethren's Church.

§ 34. *Presbyters.*

When Deacons are appointed to preside over a congregation, or over any distinct branch of service in the Brethren's Church, they are in general to be ordained Presbyters. With young brethren it is advisable to defer this ordination for one or two years, in order that they may give proof of their qualifications for the office; otherwise it should take place as soon as possible after entering thereon, and, if practicable, in the congregation to the service of which they are appointed. Missionaries of approved gifts and lengthened service should also, as hitherto, be ordained presbyters. Those who have received ordination as ministers in other Protestant churches, and have already served a congregation with the word and sacraments, are to be regarded as presbyters, if, on joining the Brethren's Church, they are called to hold a spiritual office therein. In any case of doubt, the decision is left to the Provincial authorities.

§ 35. *Deacons.*

The degree of Deacon is conferred upon brethren who are entering upon the service of the Church, and are employed as assistants in preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments, and in other church transactions; also, according to the practice of the apostolic church, upon such brethren as are engaged in the superintendence of the tem-

poral affairs of the community. This ordination qualifies for administering the sacraments.

As it must always remain a fixed principle among us, that none but those whose heart and conduct are upright before the Lord ought to be admitted to ordination, every transaction of this kind should be improved by the candidates as a solemn opportunity for self-examination, and serious reflection on the importance of their commission as followers and servants of Jesus.

§ 36. *Acoluths.*

The acceptance of Acoluths is retained in the renewed Brethren's Church, after the mode in use in the ancient Church. Those brethren and sisters who have given evidence of their ability and willingness to serve the Lord in the Brethren's Unity, either as instructors of youth, or in other offices, or those who are first entering into the service of the Church, give their hands to its servants, as a pledge of their desire to be found faithful. Although acoluths have, of later years, been ordinarily accepted in the Unity's Elders' Conference, or the Elders' Conferences, it is recommended that this solemn transaction occasionally take place in a meeting of the congregation.

CHAPTER V.

GOVERNMENT OF OUR SAVIOUR IN THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH, AND USE OF THE LOT.

"Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls."—1 PET. ii. 25.

THE government of our Saviour in the Brethren's Church must not be confounded with the use of the Lot. We shall therefore consider each subject separately.

A. GOVERNMENT OF OUR SAVIOUR.

§ 37. *Scriptural Foundation.*

Our belief in the government of our Saviour in the Brethren's congregation, is founded primarily on those passages of Scripture which ascribe to Him, as the Son of God and man, exalted at the right hand of the Father, the government of his kingdom and church, such as "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" (Matt. xxviii. 18.) and "The Father of glory hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph i. 22, 23.) Our Lord Jesus Christ, being the Lord and Head of the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, is likewise the Lord and Head of the Brethren's congregation, inasmuch as the latter is a part of this Church of God, a member of the universal church of Christ on earth, having its own peculiar destination therein assigned to it.

Every attentive observer must perceive in the annals of the Church of Christ, from its commencement to the present time, abundant traces of his interposition, which powerfully strengthen the conviction of his government of it. In like manner the history of our church affords many striking proofs of the same fact. It shews us how wonderfully the Lord overruled all circumstances to bring about the present result, and how he so operated by his Spirit on the minds of those whom he raised up for the accomplishment of his designs, that they yielded themselves with willing acquiescence to his guidance. Hence we can say with truth, "We surely are a work of his own hand," and clearly perceive that he has had the rule among our people from the first.

§ 38. *Special Experience.*

When, therefore, we speak of our Saviour's government in the Brethren's Church, we mean nothing different from his office as Chief Shepherd of his Church, as taught in Holy Scripture. At the same time, however, we indicate thereby our conviction, that Christ exercises this office with respect to *our* Church in a special manner, suited to her special destination and requirements, having brought her to the con-

sciousness of her deep need of him, and thus led her to a full and child-like faith in his government. What occurs in the experience of individual believers holds good in this case also. While all that Christ is willing to be to his people is freely offered to every one of them, he, notwithstanding, allows individuals to appropriate him to themselves in an especial manner, according to the constitutional peculiarities or mental endowments allotted to each, and the peculiar circumstances of the outward or inward life into which the Lord leads them ; for our Saviour gives to each believer that of which he stands most in need. And what is realized in believers individually, may also be expected to be realized in them collectively, and that in proportion as they really form a spiritual community, and make common experiences in the life of faith.

In this manner the Lord has been pleased more especially to lead the Brethren's Church to realize the blessing of his Shepherd-care, and believingly to appropriate it to herself. He prepared her for it from the beginning, by teaching her not only to lay hold by faith on his redemption, but to fix her eye upon Himself in his Divine Person as the God-man, and to hold confidential intercourse with him, as with a Friend and Brother. He has shewn her, moreover, how much she needs him as her only Shepherd and Elder. He brought her human guides to a thorough conviction of their own incompetency to govern the rapidly increasing church, and to preserve it from destruction. He stript the congregation of all outward supports, and left her exposed to attacks on every side. He put, at the same time, a task into her hands which far exceeded her strength and means to perform. And having thus brought his servants to a thorough knowledge of their own impotence and insufficiency, when they fervently besought him, in this perplexity, to take charge of them Himself, he, according to his own promise, heard their united prayers, and made himself known to them as One who was willing to be their All. Thus, on the 16th of September and the 13th of November, in the year 1741, the servants of the church in the first instance, and afterwards the whole congregation, were led cordially to believe, and thankfully to rejoice in a truth, which up to that period had remained more or less unknown, or at least had not been so clearly perceived and so generally understood.

The details of this event are given in the " Memorial Days

of the Renewed Brethren's Church." It will be sufficient here to bring the following particulars under notice. In a synodal conference of the principal servants of the congregation, held in London, Brother Leonard Dober found himself obliged to lay down the office of chief elder of all the congregations, as being a burden beyond his strength. On considering to whom this most important office should be intrusted, the brethren became convinced that the load was too heavy for any human shoulders. In this crisis, the Lord relieved the hearts of his embarrassed servants by the assurance, that he himself was, and would ever remain, the Chief Elder of the congregation. And this conviction, wrought by him in the hearts of his servants, when announced, on the 13th of November, to the whole church, was received in faith, with joyful and universal assent, and confirmed by an extraordinary visitation of divine grace.

§ 39. *Result of this special Experience.*

Since that time we have denoted the government of our Saviour amongst us by the expression, that he is the Elder of our Brotherly Covenant, an expression borrowed from the account of that conference given by Spangenberg, who was a member of it. He writes:—

“What we intended and with all our hearts desired, was that he would make a special covenant with his poor Brethren's people, and accept of us as his peculiar property,* take an interest in all our circumstances, however insignificant they might appear, have a watchful care over us, admit each member of the congregation to a confidential intercourse with him, and do for us in perfection all that our former Elder had done in weakness.—We, on our part, would love and honour him as our Elder, by his grace maintain a confidential intercourse with him, follow his mind and will with childlike simplicity, choose no man for our Master in spiritual concerns, but faithfully depend on him with all our hearts, even though all besides, in these degenerate times, should fall away from him.”

We should regard it as matter of deep regret, could it be

* That is, that he would allow us to make a special appropriation to the Brethren's Unity of the blessings of his office as the Chief Shepherd of his universal Church.

shewn that this blessed experience had led, or were likely to lead to self-exaltation on our part. We do not regard what the Lord has graciously bestowed upon us, as an exclusive privilege of our church; on the contrary, we are convinced that every church or congregation grounded on Christ the rock, and every individual believer, may in like manner rejoice in his special leading, and by faith appropriate to themselves his universal office as the Shepherd of his people; and we are equally certain that there is but *one* covenant by means of which any soul can be assured of its election of grace, namely that covenant which the Saviour ratified upon the cross with each poor sinner. But we desire to rejoice with gratitude, that the Lord, of his great goodness, has led us to appropriate him to ourselves; and that a day stands marked in our history, on which the whole congregation clearly perceived, that the government amongst us belongs not to man; and when, by his Spirit, he put his seal to the promise which we made Him, of unreserved submission to his holy will.

§ 40. *Continued happy effect of this special Experience.*

The blessing of this special manifestation of our Lord as the Head and Elder of our covenant has not ceased; and it will, we confidently trust, continue as long as the consciousness of our own weakness, helplessness, and insufficiency, and consequently of our need of his especial guidance, continues to actuate us.

The Brethren's Unity, as a whole, has been saved thereby from the peril of a popedom, an absolute human supremacy in spiritual things. We have learned that we must not allow ourselves to be led and guided by men, but only by the Lord; that we must not trust in man for the maintenance or furtherance of our affairs, but only in him; that we must do nothing but what he commands, and be quite content in every case, if but his holy will be effected in us and by us.

The *servants* of the Lord and of the church, whom he has appointed to take charge in his name of its individual congregations, or provinces, or of the whole Unity, cannot fail to recognize in this manifestation of grace a powerful admonition to holy earnestness in their calling. But, at the same time, they will find especial comfort in their confessional

deliberations and in their private communings with our Saviour, from the thought, that He is with them as their Chief Elder, that He gives them to know his holy will, in answer to their childlike prayers, and in his mercy and faithfulness makes good their manifold mistakes and failures, when with contrite hearts they implore his grace.

— And thus, too, each individual member of the congregation has a firmer seal put to that believing confidence in which every child of God may rejoice; he is convinced that the Lord is his nearest and dearest friend, and that he will interest himself in his affairs, and graciously permit him to hold the most intimate and cordial intercourse with him. May he ever remain the sole Lord and Elder of our covenant.

“ Lord, thy church’s Rock,
 Who dost rule thy flock,
 Elder of the congregation,
 We, with humble adoration,
 Thee, and thee alone,
 Our chief Shepherd own.”

B. USE OF THE LOT.

§ 41. *Direction of the Lord by means of the Lot.*

The means by which our Lord and Saviour conducts his government in the Brethren’s congregation are no other than those by which he rules his universal Church; namely, his Holy Word, his Holy Spirit, who guides us into all truth, and the dispensations of his providence, by which he determines the course of his Church, and of each individual, according to his own wisdom and love. We require, however, if we are to be led by him, a heart obedient to the direction of his Word, an ear open to receive the instruction of his Spirit, and a watchful eye to mark the intimations which he gives us in the leadings of his providence. The more these dispositions are wrought in our hearts through grace, the more securely shall we be able to follow his guidance.

Such was the conviction of our forefathers, from the first establishment of our union. Nevertheless, there were peculiar cases in which, deeply convinced of the insufficiency of their own insight into the things of God, and his government of his church, and animated by an earnest desire to know the will of the Lord, and to be guided by him alone, they

if the matter is of such a nature, that a question may with propriety be asked. In such cases, great care must be taken to ascertain whether the persons so applying can fully resign themselves to the decision of the lot, and the conference must see to it, that such a decision be conscientiously adhered to; *Whoever acts otherwise is excluded from the congregation.*

§ 43. *Further Regulations with regard to the use of the Lot, especially in Appointments to Office.*

When we refer the decision of any matter to our Lord by the lot, for example, the establishment of a new settlement or mission, or the case of a person who has requested it for his or her guidance, it is manifest that a decision, so received, must be binding. But another case presents itself, in which a conference, according to synodal direction, puts a question concerning persons who have not requested it themselves; for example, in appointments to office. From the very nature of the case it is clear, that the question can only be, whether our Saviour approves that steps be taken that the person named be called to the office in question. In this case, the decision by lot only binds the conference receiving it, to make or not to make such a proposal. Nevertheless, the brethren and sisters to whom a proposal approved by the lot is made, receive, by such a direction of our Lord, a solemn call thoroughly to try themselves before him, as to what his will herein may be; and they are earnestly charged, neither to accept nor decline a proposal so made, without the most mature reflection. They must especially take care that no considerations of convenience, or other impure motives, influence their determination to decline a proposal. This would be utterly inconsistent with the character of faithful servants, who practise self-denial out of love to their Lord. When brethren and sisters accept a call, under a feeling of the heavy burden thereby laid upon them, but with renunciation of their own will, and simply in obedience and submission to our Saviour's leading, He, who imposes no burden upon us without giving us strength to bear it, will sustain their willing obedience with his support and blessing.

The Synod, having carefully considered the use of the lot in appointments to office, and taken into account, on the one side, the blessing which has hitherto rested on this use, and the force of the arguments adduced in favour of its con-

tinuance, and, on the other, the difficulties which are frequently interposed to its employment by the diversity of qualifications required for the different situations, and the want of suitable candidates for them, especially in our British and North American provinces, agreed in the following resolutions:—

1. We continue to esteem it a privilege to be permitted to use the lot in appointments to office.

2. For the Unity's Elders' Conference, the following principles still hold good in the use of the lot, in regard to the supply of offices, and the appointment of bishops:—

a. In the supply of offices, the question is usually asked with two lots, an affirmative and a negative.

b. If, after maturely weighing all circumstances, there appear only two suitable proposals, or if, after others be negatived, only two remain, these two are to be taken together into the lot, and one of them drawn, after the example of the Apostles. (Acts i. 23—26.)

c. If in addition to two proposals which appear suitable, others occur, regarding which a degree of hesitation is felt, a previous question must be asked, whether notice shall be taken of them.

d. But when only one suitable proposal is found for an office requiring peculiar qualifications, the Unity's Elders' Conference is at liberty in such a case, by way of exception, to make the proposal to a person without lot. This, however, must always be mentioned to the party concerned, who is at liberty to request a decision by lot.

3. For the several Provinces, the special directions as to when and how the lot shall be used, are left for the decision of the Provincial Synods, always supposing that these rules do not militate against the general principles laid down on the subject.

§ 44. *Special Rules for the several Provinces.*

In conformity with the principle just mentioned, the following rules, based on the wishes and proposals expressed by the Provincial Synods of last year, were sanctioned by the Synod:—

A. For the *Continental* Province, the rules confirmed for Unity's Elders' Conference in No. 2 of the preceding section, remain in force.

B. For the *British* Province, the following rules are laid down :—

1. In the supply of offices and the change of Labourers, the Provincial Elders' Conference are at liberty to use or not to use the lot, according as circumstances and their conviction may direct. They are then to forward the call, subject to the provisions in Nos. 2 and 3, to the brethren concerned, who, according to the Resolution of the General Synod of 1848, confirmed by the present Synod, shall be allowed to have a direct question asked by lot, which shall be decisive.

2. Should the proposed appointment involve a seat in a General Elders' Conference, it shall be laid before the members of that conference by the Provincial Elders' Conference, through the president, that they may have an opportunity of expressing their sentiments regarding it. Should no objections be made, or such as, in the opinion of the Provincial Elders' Conference, are not of sufficient weight, the case shall proceed as directed in No. 1.

3. Should the proposed appointment involve a seat in an Elders' Conference, the Provincial Elders' Conference shall lay it before the members of that conference through their president. If objections are made, which are not satisfactory to the Provincials, but which they are unable to remove, the case shall be referred to the Unity's Elders' Conference, whose decision shall be final. If it be in favour of the proposed appointment, or, if no objections have been made, the call shall be proceeded with as in No. 1.

4. The above rules apply to Assistant Ministers also.

C. For the *North American* Province, the following rules, as agreed on by the Provincial Synods of both the northern and southern districts, in the year 1856, have been confirmed :—

1. When the members of the Provincial Elders' Conference, after deliberating on an appointment, are fully and unanimously convinced, that they desire, in sincere faith, for *themselves*, the direction of the Lord through the lot, then they may ask the question by the lot; but such use of the lot shall be binding on the Provincial Elders' Conference only, and not on the person to whom the appointment is offered.

2. When a brother or sister receives a call from the Provincial Elders' Conference, and requires a *special lot* for his or her direction, he or she may ask the Provincial Elders'

Conference in writing to have a special lot for himself or herself, and the directions given by the lot shall be absolutely binding upon that brother or sister,

3. When a brother or sister is desirous of having, in his or her private affairs, a decision by lot, the use of the lot shall be allowed, provided the Provincial Elders' Conference becomes satisfied, that the applicant for its use is possessed of implicit faith and confidence, and will yield perfect obedience to, and cheerful acquiescence in the Lord's will thus ascertained; and provided further, that the matter concerning which the lot is requested, be of such a nature as to render its use proper in the estimation of the Provincial Elders' Conference.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BRETHERN'S UNITY.

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."—EPH. iv. 3, 4.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."—1 COR. xii. 13.

Introduction.

THE Synod has again, in the foregoing chapter, declared its conviction that the direction of the Unity is in the hand of the Saviour, as the invisible Head of his Church on earth. He alone is the Master of the vessel, who stands with his hand on the helm, and we desire to know nothing of any other governance. Still, while the Lord himself sits supreme, guiding, guarding, and ruling his Church, he makes use of the weak hands of his servants as his instruments. He places watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem, till he establish it. The Brethren's Church is no exception here; it cannot do without this instrumental oversight and guidance, if things are to stand and proceed in that order which is set before us in God's word.

The *Constitution* of any Christian community is that which

prescribes more definitely how this is to be done. Such a constitution of a church of Christ, however, must be distinguished from those rules and regulations which are grounded on holy writ. It is, after all, only a human ordinance, and therefore can and ought to be changed whenever necessity requires. This our Church has constantly acknowledged, and it was not till the year 1769, nearly fifty years after the building of Herrnhut, that our constitution was established in that form, which it has retained, as to its essential features, down to this time. For this reason, too, the present Synod has not hesitated to admit those important changes into the constitution which are laid down in the following paragraphs, convinced that necessity demanded them,—a necessity which had been more immediately felt and expressed by our American congregations, and thus proved the immediate occasion of convening the present Synod.

The ground of this necessity is to be found in the fact, that from earliest times the several parts of the Unity, situated as they were in various lands, had each their peculiar position in, and relation to the surrounding population and the other churches of the land. They were led hereby gradually to mould themselves into forms so diverse in many particulars, that it became more and more clear, that the method hitherto adopted by the General Synod, of putting forth one uniform code of regulations for the whole, was no longer possible,—since the resolutions necessary for one part of the Unity were altogether unsuitable for another, and were, consequently, as far as it was concerned, a dead letter.

This it was which made it imperative to give to Provincial Synods a more independent position, assigning to them the duty of legislating upon that which was specific, whilst the General Synods retained to themselves only the duty of laying down those general principles, by which the former must be guided.

As time advanced, an ever-increasing diversity shewed itself in the development of individual provinces, and in their wants and spheres of usefulness. It became more and more difficult for the Unity's Elders' Conference to preserve uniformity in the government committed to it; more especially where great distance interfered with mutual intercourse, and hindered an adequate acquaintance with local relations. Hence, in connection with what has been said before, there

was a call for a more independent *provincial* executive,—a conference which should be immediately appointed by and responsible to the Province, and which in this respect should take the place of the Unity's Elders' Conference.

The character of the General Synods being thus altered, a corresponding change in the representation seemed to follow. It was no longer the individual congregations whose diverse concerns and necessities were to be mutually considered and disposed of, but rather the wants of each Province in its entirety. Hence that representation, which heretofore consisted of an unequal number of deputies from the respective provinces, must give place to one essentially equal, in order to secure to each portion of the Unity full confidence, that their relations and wishes would be duly respected. And such a change can be effected with the less hesitation, since the special wants of each congregation can now, according to the altered import of Provincial Synods, find in them all the attention they require.

This it was which led the Synod, after earnest and prayerful consideration, with a unanimity which calls for thankfulness, to make the following essential alteration in the constitution of the Unity.

A. GENERAL SYNODS.

§ 45. *Use and Purpose of General Synods.*

The servants and deputies of the Unity assembled at a General Synod, represent the whole Unity, and are empowered to act in its name. To such Synods, therefore, it necessarily belongs to consult and legislate upon those matters which are of general import.

The principles which lie at the foundation of our union, and serve to guide not only the servants but also the members of our congregations, are carefully examined, corrected, and laid down anew. In this respect the condition of the whole and all its parts is thoroughly investigated, and those arrangements are made, which are demanded by the well-being and calling of the Unity as a whole. Moreover, one of the most important fruits of General Synods is the furthering of mutual acquaintance and the interchange of different views and experiences.

§ 46. *Incumbencies of General Synods.*

In conformity with the use and purpose of General Synods, their duties and incumbencies are the following.

(a.) To determine the doctrines of the Church—*i.e.*, to decide all questions which may arise upon this subject.

(b.) To decide as to all essential points of our Liturgy.

(c.) To prescribe the fundamental rules of order and discipline.

(d.) To determine what is required for membership in the Church.

(e.) To nominate and appoint Bishops.

(f.) The chief oversight of the Unity's educational institutions and Foreign Missions, as well as the conducting of the latter.

(g.) The inspection and management of the Unity's finances.

(h.) To choose the Unity's Elders' Conference, and to prescribe the manner in which vacancies in the same are to be filled up.

(i.) To form and constitute General Synods, and to fix the time and place of their meeting, also to establish the basis of representation at the same: and

(k.) Generally, to determine all that belongs to the general constitution of the Unity and its ecclesiastical order.

Note. It is to be understood that power over all Unity's offices is included; and that no resolution of a Provincial Synod which affects the constitution of the Unity as a whole, can be valid without the sanction of a General Synod.

The object of General Synods cannot, however, be merely to determine the general principles of doctrine and Christian life; it is, moreover, their duty to ascertain in how far these principles have been carried out in practice. In this point of view too they carefully weigh and pronounce upon the resolutions of Provincial Synods.

Note. This is not, however, to be understood as containing any limitation of the free action of Provincial Synods, so long as they keep within the bounds of the powers assigned them; but simply as reserving to the General Synods the reasonable right, when it shall appear to them to be necessary, to refer the resolutions of one Provincial Synod to the next for reconsideration.

§ 47. *Members of a General Synod.*

The members of a General Synod are the following :

I. Members ex officio.

(1.) The members of the recent Unity's Elders' Conference. (For further particulars see under C. § 57, &c.)

(2.) The Bishops of the Brethren's Church.

(3.) A member appointed by each Provincial Elders' Conference, unless one of their number attend the Synod in another capacity. (For further particulars see under D. § 63, &c.)

(4.) The following brethren holding Unity's offices :

(a.) The Secretarius Unitatis Fratrum in Angliâ.

(b.) The Administrators of Unity's Estates in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

(c.) The Director of the Office of the Unity's Wardens' Department.

(d.) The Director of the Office of the Missions' Department.

(e.) The Unity's Librarian.

II. Deputies of the several Provinces.

Nine deputies are to be chosen by each Province. (In America, seven by the northern District, and two by the southern.) These are to be accredited in that manner which is legal and valid in their respective countries.

III. Missionaries to be called by the Unity's Elders' Conference.

Here the utmost possible regard is to be paid to the different mission-fields and the wishes of the missionaries. To facilitate the latter object, confidential votes are to be obtained from the individual missionaries. The number of missionaries thus called must not be less than five. It is to be understood, however, that bishops coming, *ex officio*, from the mission-fields may be included in this number.

Besides the above-named members, who are all entitled to vote, the Unity's Elders' Conference may call one or another brother, whose presence appears to them desirable, to take his seat as an ordinary member of the Synod, without a vote.

Note 1. No one entitled to a seat in a Synod, *ex officio*, ought to make use of his right, unless it can be done without

damage to the office he holds. The ultimate decision upon the case lies with the Unity's Elders' Conference.

Note 2. A committee, consisting of all the deputies of the Continental Province, came to the resolution, that at least three out of their nine deputies should always be laymen, *i.e.* not conference members. To this the Synod saw no objection.

§ 48. *Election of Deputies to the Synod.*

With reference to the *Eligibility* of deputies to a General Synod, the following resolutions were adopted. All brethren are eligible who have been members of the church for two years, who are communicants, and are more than twenty-four years of age. As to what regards the election itself, the Synod acknowledged it to be most in correspondence with the character of that body, which meets to form resolutions referring only to the *general* concerns of the Unity and the relation of its respective Provinces to each other, that the deputies should represent the Provincial Synods and not the individual congregations, and therefore should be chosen by the former and not *immediately* by the congregations.

Although the American Province in both its districts has already acted upon this principle, the Synod sanctioned a resolution, agreed upon by the deputies of the Continental Province, that the final decision upon their future mode of election shall be deferred until their next Provincial Synod. In like manner, the British Province is permitted to proceed according to the present mode of election until its Provincial Synod has declared, whether it will continue to retain it, or will adopt the before named method as more suitable. Whilst these two Provinces shall continue to choose their deputies *directly* by the congregations, the following rules are to be in force :—

The brother chosen as deputy must have an absolute majority, *i.e.* more than one half the number of votes.

If, however, the majority is not sufficient, either in a first or second voting, a third voting must take place, when a relative majority is to decide. The brethren electing are earnestly recommended to abstain from all party spirit, and in their choice to make the general good their sole object.

When the confidence of a congregation is placed in a

brother belonging to another congregation, it is at liberty to choose him as its deputy.

With reference to the *right of voting*, the following is still to be added :

(a.) For the European Continental Province :—

All brethren twenty-four years of age, and who have been members of the church at least two years, are entitled to vote.

(b.) For the British Province :—

All communicant brethren are entitled to vote, who are twenty-one years of age, and who have been members of the church two years, provided also they have regularly paid congregation cash, as fixed by their respective congregation conferences.

The written votes of absent members may be received, when duly authenticated.

When the president of a meeting for voting finds himself proposed for election, he shall resign his seat to another brother to be chosen at the time.

Finally, each Province is at liberty to choose, for each of its deputies, an alternate or vice-deputy.

§ 49. *Further Preparations for a Synod.*

It is recommended as a preparation for the Synod that, as heretofore, the conferences go carefully through the Results of the last Synod, taking minutes of the same. Each deputy to a Provincial Synod ought to acquaint himself as much as possible, whether by way of public confessional meetings or otherwise, with the wants and concerns of the congregation he represents.

The preparation for a General Synod should take place before the preceding Provincial Synod, in order that some understanding, upon memorials containing propositions, the subject of which belongs to a General Synod, may be come to by the Province they concern. The deputies of the Province will then be able to bring the matter forward in the manner in which it has been entertained by the Provincial Synod. It is the proper way, therefore, that such memorials should first of all be laid before a preparatory Provincial Synod. Yet it remains free to each member of the church, to address a special memorial to the General Synod upon the subject. It must, however, be clearly understood, that

only such memorials can be received which are duly signed by the writers, which treat of matters within the scope of the business of a General Synod, and are not of a purely provincial character.

It is the duty of the deputy charged with memorials and proposals to bring them forward faithfully at the proper time and place, for the consideration and decision of the Synod.

§ 50. *Order of Procedure at a Synod.*

The following rules are to remain in force until expressly altered by a resolution of Synod. All other matters concerning the conducting of business are left to each Synod to arrange at the time.

(a.) All members of a Synod have an equal right of vote; usually a majority of votes decides.

(b.) We look upon it as a favour when, in cases of importance, the Synod feels freedom, notwithstanding it may have been unanimous in voting, to leave the ultimate decision of a matter to the Lord by appeal to the Lot.

(c.) Further, in accordance with the brotherly character of our union, it cannot be the intention that one portion of the Unity should, by a preponderance of votes, force *changes* in the established order of things upon another portion, contrary to the views of a considerable majority of the representatives of that portion. Resolutions of *this kind*, therefore, although passed by a majority of the Synod, cannot be considered as binding upon the whole Unity, should a decided protest be entered against them by at least two-thirds of the representatives of *one* of the Provinces. Here the northern and southern Districts of the American Province are counted as one. It is self-evident too, that in such resolutions, the votes of members of Unity's Elders' Conference, of those who have been called by them, of ex-officio members, and, in a word, of all members who are not deputies elected by the Provinces, are not to be taken into account.

(d.) The Synod is opened by the President of the existing Unity's Elders' Conference, and constitutes itself by choosing its President and other officers.

Note. What has been resolved upon under head (c.) is couched expressly in such terms as to shew that it applies

only to *alterations* proposed in established principles and in resolutions which have been passed by earlier General Synods. It will be readily understood that such a rule can have no application to the ordinary transactions of a General Synod; it will come into force only when deputies of a Province feel themselves compelled to use the right of protest herewith conceded them.

§ 51. *Expenses of Synods—how covered.*

The journeys and maintenance of all the members of a Synod will be defrayed from a fund provided for that purpose. (See Chap. XIV. § 128.) As soon as the account of this fund can be closed, a summary statement of its receipts and disbursements will be drawn up, and forwarded for circulation among our various congregations. Considering the very serious expense which a Synod entails, it may be reasonably expected of all brethren who attend it, that they will travel as economically as possible. If they bring their wives with them, it must be at their own charge.

B. PROVINCIAL SYNODS.

§ 52. *Object and Sphere of Provincial Synods.*

The chief direction of all provincial concerns, and the power of legislating upon them, belongs immediately to Provincial Synods; yet their resolutions must not come into collision with those rules and principles which have been established for the Unity by General Synods.

§ 53. *Incumbencies which Provincial Synods have in common.*

(a.) To determine the time and place of their meeting and their own organization.

(b.) The chief oversight and direction of the Finances of the Province.

(c.) The chief oversight and direction of all educational institutions in the Province.

(d.) The founding and settling of new congregations, as well as the altering of the constitutions of such as already exist.

(e.) The direction of the Home Mission and Diaspora work in the Province.

(f.) The direction and superintendence of all publications in the Province set on foot by a Provincial Synod, or issuing from the Provincial Elders' Conference; in this due regard is to be paid to established principles both in doctrine and ritual.

(g.) The hearing of complaints and the redressing of grievances.

If a Provincial Synod shall exceed its powers, or if there arise a difference of opinion as to this point, in regard to any resolution that has been come to, the decision lies with the Unity's Elders' Conference, who can, if necessary, appeal to a General Synod.

§ 54. *Incumbencies of individual Provincial Synods.*

To the incumbencies common to all Provincial Synods are to be added the following special resolutions come to by the last Provincial Synods of the several Provinces, and which the General Synod has acknowledged to contain nothing inconsistent with the privileges and powers conceded by it. These any future Provincial Synod has a right to alter, provided such alterations are in harmony with the general rules laid down in the Results of the General Synod.

(A.) Special incumbencies of the Provincial Synods of the north American District.

Note. In the following specification, and also in that relating to the southern District, the word "Province" is used in the sense of District.

(a.) To fix the time and place of meeting for the next Provincial Synod; but in case of emergency the Provincial Elders' Conference may convene the Provincial Synod at an earlier day.

(b.) To determine from time to time the number of delegates which each congregation shall be entitled to send to such Synods.

(c.) To elect the delegates, which the Province is entitled to send to General Synods.

(d.) To elect an executive Board, to be called the Provincial Elders' Conference, consisting of such number of members as the Provincial Synods may, from time to time, determine to be chosen from among the ordained ministers of the church.

(e.) To examine and direct all financial matters of the Province, and prescribe rules for their management.

(f.) To have the oversight and direction of all the educational institutions of the Province.

(g.) The regulation and organization of congregations and the general direction of the Home Missions of the Province.

(h.) To direct and control all church publications in the Province, subject to the established doctrine and liturgy.

(i.) To prescribe the mode of nominating bishops.

(k.) To hear and redress complaints and grievances, and generally to direct all matters which belong to the government of the church in the Province, and to adopt such rules and regulations concerning the same, as do not encroach upon the incumbencies of General Synods.

Note. By way of explanation to (i.), it is to be observed:—The object of this resolution does not go further than to secure to the Provincial Synod the right of nomination, on occasion of the appointment of bishops for the Province. It implies, that neither a General Synod, nor the Unity's Elders' Conference, can appoint a brother as a bishop for this Province, without his having been previously proposed by the Provincial Synod.

(B.) Special incumbencies of the Provincial Synods of the south American District.

Each Synod, after it has come together, shall be opened by the President of the existing executive board (Provincial Elders' Conference), but will proceed to constitute itself by the choice of its President and other officers.

It is the duty of Provincial Synods, thoroughly to consider the spiritual and temporal condition of the congregations of the Province; to make rules, orders, and regulations for their superintendence; to hear complaints and redress grievances; to examine into and regulate all the financial concerns of the Province, and to lay down rules for their management; to prescribe the way and manner of nominating brethren for the office of bishop; to elect the delegates to the General Synods, according to the appointment of the latter; and generally to make the necessary arrangements in all concerns belonging to the government of the church in this Province.

The Provincial Synod can make alterations in the constitution of the Province, under the following restrictions:

Any proposed alteration in the constitution shall be re-

ferred to a committee of nine brethren to be chosen by ballot, and when they have reported upon it, it must be read and voted upon on three several days, after which it can only be adopted, when at each reading it has been approved by a majority of three-fourths of the votes given.

(C.) For the European Continental Province there is to be added only the following:

The President of the existing Unity's Elders' Conference, as the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Province, opens the Synod; which afterwards constitutes itself by the choice of its President, &c.

(D.) Special regulations for the British Provincial Synods.

(a.) The President of the Provincial Elders' Conference, for the time being, presides.

(b.) Each Synod chooses, by majority of votes, a new Provincial Elders' Conference, consisting of three brethren. The members of the former Provincial Elders' Conference are re-eligible. Two-thirds of the votes are necessary to make the election valid. One of the members chosen is appointed President by the Unity's Elders' Conference.

(c.) No proposition affecting the constitution of the British Provincial Synod or the Provincial Elders' Conference, can be brought forward in a Provincial Synod, unless it has, three months previously, been communicated by its author to the Provincial Elders' Conference, and through them to the congregations of the British Province.

§ 55. *Members of Provincial Synods.*

The following regulations, as to members of Provincial Synods, have either been made by the last Provincial Synods, or, as in the case of the Continental Province, have been agreed upon by a committee of all the representatives of the Province here assembled.

The remarks made in the first paragraph of § 54 apply equally to them.

(A.) The following are members of the Provincial Synod in the north American District.

(a.) The members of the existing Provincial Elders' Conference.

(b.) All bishops residing in the District, whether in actual service or not.

(c.) All ordained ministers in the District who are in actual service, either in the congregations, or in the various educational institutions.

(d.) The delegates from the several congregations of the Brethren in the District.

(e.) The members of the Unity's Elders' Conference or their delegates, the delegates of the several Provinces of the Unity, the financial agent of the Unity's Elders' Conference in the Province, and such other brethren as the Provincial Synod may determine upon, shall be entitled to seats (as advisory members), but without a vote.

(B.) Members of the Provincial Synod of the southern District of the American Province are:—

(a.) The members of the existing executive board (Provincial Elders' Conference).

(b.) The members of the Unity's Elders' Conference or the General Board of the whole Unity.

(c.) All bishops of the church, whether they are in office or otherwise.

(d.) All ordained brethren who are in actual service, either in the congregations, or as directors of the educational institutions of the District.

(e.) The financial Agent of the Unity's Elders' Conference in the District, usually called the Administrator.

(f.) The delegates of the several congregations of the Brethren's Church in the District.

(g.) Members of the provincial board of any other Province of the Unity, or their delegates, as well as the delegates of other Provincial Synods of the Brethren's Church, as consulting members, (without a vote,) unless the Synod determines otherwise.

(h.) Besides this, the Synod has the right to allow other persons to be present as advisory, but not as voting members.

With respect to the representation of the congregations, the following rules are laid down.

Each congregation is entitled to one delegate for 50 communicant members; but congregations with a less number of communicants, if they have been regularly organized, shall also be entitled to one delegate.

The following rules are to be observed with reference to the choice of deputies:

All adult brethren who are members of a congregation, and who have a vote at congregation elections, are electors.

The delegates must be communicants of the church. An absolute majority of the votes given, decides the election. The voting is by ballot. Should the election be undecided, on account of more than one brother having the same number of votes, a new election must take place. The delegates are to be provided with the necessary credentials.

(C.) Members of a British Provincial Synod are:—

Besides the members of the Provincial Elders' Conference, the bishops in the Province, the *Advocatus* and *Secretarius Fratrum*, the Agent of the Foreign Missions, such members of Elders' Conferences, and such labourers as can leave their place of residence without prejudice to the office they hold. To which must be added the deputies of the congregations, each congregation having the right to choose one of their number who must be chosen by an absolute majority.

Members of the Unity's Elders' Conference and deputies sent from other Provinces of the Unity may attend as advisory members, but without vote.

The mode of electing deputies for the congregations is to be the same as that for deputies to the General Synod.

(D.) The members of a Provincial Synod for the European Continental Province are:—

(a.) The members of the Unity's Elders' Conference as the Provincial Elders' Conference of this Province.

(b.) The bishops of the Province.

(c.) The deputies of the congregations of the Province. (For further particulars see what follows.)

(d.) The deputies of the Elders' Conferences of the Province, each of which is to be represented by *one* brother.

(e.) The brethren of the Elders' Conference of the place in which the Synod is held, of whom, however, only *one* will have a vote as representing the conference.

(f.) Brethren who may be called by the Unity's Elders' Conference as the Provincial Elders' Conference of this Province, will be advisory members without vote. Some of these should be Diaspora labourers.

(g.) Deputies who may be sent from the other Provinces of the Unity are consulting members without vote. With reference to the choice of the deputies of the congregations the following rules are in force:—

Each place congregation, numbering 800 inhabitants and upwards, is entitled to send two deputies. The place in which the Synod is held will also send two deputies. Every other place congregation, as well as Berlin and Rixdorf, will send each *one*. The deputies of congregations wherever possible should be laymen, *i.e.*, not members of Elders' Conferences. The rules concerning the right of voting, eligibility, and mode of conducting elections, are the same as for the General Synod.

§ 56. *Expenses of Provincial Synods.*

The expenses of the Provincial Synods are to be borne by the respective Provinces. This, however, has no reference to members not belonging to the Province, who must bear their own expenses.

C. UNITY'S ELDERS' CONFERENCE.

§ 57. *Directing Board of the Unity.*

The oversight and direction of the Unity from one General Synod to another, in all matters pertaining to General Synods, is committed to a board chosen by the whole Synod, and called the Unity's Elders' Conference, or the Directing Board of the Protestant Church of the Brethren. This board acts in the name, and by the authority of the General Synod, to which it is accountable. In the same manner, all other boards, as well as servants of the Unity, whether appointed by this conference, or by the General Synod, are subordinated and responsible to it. In order to give legal validity to those transactions of the Unity's Elders' Conference, which are conducted in the name of the Unity, it receives from the General Synod a Power of Attorney, by which it is accredited as the directing board of the Protestant Brethren's Unity.

§ 58. *Duties and Functions of the Unity's Elders' Conference.*

The Functions of the Unity's Elders' Conference are twofold:—

(1.) The chief management of all concerns of the Unity,

which are of a general nature, in accordance with the principles and rules laid down by each General Synod; besides which this Conference represents the whole Unity in its dealings with the respective State and Church authorities.

(2.) The chief oversight in respect to the carrying out of general principles and regulations as established by General Synods.

To those concerns alluded to under head (1.) belong principally, Foreign Missions and the Unity's Finances.

The duty mentioned under (2.) the Unity's Elders' Conference can only discharge *mediately* through the *provincial boards*, and by keeping up a constant connection with them. To these boards belongs such oversight in the first place, and they are in *this* matter responsible to the Unity's Elders' Conference, and bound to furnish them with the necessary information by correspondence, and transmission of copies of their minutes, and to communicate to them the Results of the Provincial Synods.

Note. It is to be understood as forming part of the responsibility of the provincial authorities towards the Unity's Elders' Conference, that they furnish that board with every information concerning matters which belong to the sphere of its duties, when requested to do so. When they seem to have acted contrary to resolutions of a General Synod, they must be ready to receive the representations and observations of the Unity's Elders' Conference upon the subject. Without a responsibility of this kind, our union would be only in appearance. On the other hand, by means of this, the several provinces will in future have a standing Board of Appeal upon matters of general interest. The Unity's Elders' Conference is further empowered in extraordinary cases to call together a General Synod, even when it has not been expressly commissioned so to do by the last General Synod. It is also empowered, when special and urgent circumstances seem to require it, to make an exception to a rule laid down by a Synod, which exception, however, has only a temporary validity until the next General Synod; other conferences have, in this respect, to look to the Unity's Elders' Conference as the superior board. It is pre-supposed, that the Unity's Elders' Conference will not attempt to make such an exception, unless, after conscientious and thorough examination, it appears that circumstances imperatively demand it; and it will also be the duty of

this board to report to the next General Synod upon the subject, stating the grounds for the exception thus made.

According to the new Constitution, the connection between the Unity's Elders' Conference and the Provinces will be less direct than formerly; hence it is both more desirable and more needful that *official visits* take place in the various Provinces by members of the Unity's Elders' Conference. In this view, a deputation to a Provincial Synod is recommended as an excellent means for becoming acquainted with the state of things in the Province.

§ 59. *Peculiar relation of the Unity's Elders' Conference to the Continental Province as their Provincial Elders' Conference.*

The question, What shall in future be the relation of the Unity's Elders' Conference to the Continental Conference, called for much and mature deliberation. Hitherto this province has had no Provincial Elders' Conference like other parts of the Unity, but has stood under the immediate direction of the Unity's Elders' Conference; which has done for them, what has been done for other more distant provinces by their provincial boards.

If, on the one hand, it seemed most natural, that the Continental Province should, like the other provinces, have its own provincial board, chosen by itself, and that the Unity's Elders' Conference should consequently be relieved of what constituted, up to the present time, a principal part of its business, this idea was, on the other hand, more than counterbalanced by weighty doubts as to such a partition of the business, heretofore transacted by the Unity's Elders' Conference alone, between two separate boards, the Provincial Elders' Conference and Unity's Elders' Conference, both located in Germany. Added to this was the conviction, that, in any case, it would not be desirable, without absolute necessity, to make so extensive a change in our executive department, before time had proved the suitability of the new constitution. Thus the Synod was led to the following resolution:

The Unity's Elders' Conference,—having at present their residence in Germany, and being likely to continue there, on account of the landed possessions of the Unity, and the recognition which they require, as the Directing Board of

the Unity, for this as well as other purposes from the Government,—will for the present (*i.e.* until the next General Synod) take upon itself the direction of the concerns of the Continental Province as their provincial board, and in this capacity will be responsible to the Continental Provincial Synod.

§ 60. *Organization of the Unity's Elders' Conference.*

The Unity's Elders' Conference will be divided as heretofore, according to the varied character of its principal duties, into three departments:—

(1.) The Helpers and Education department, which has the general oversight of church-life and of doctrine; and, in the Continental Province, has to watch over the spiritual course of the congregations, both in doctrine and practice, as well as over the educational concerns of the province.

(2.) The Wardens' department, to which are committed the financial concerns of the Unity, as well as those of the Continental Province.

(3.) The Mission department, to which the superintendence and management of our missionary work are specially committed.

These three departments constitute together the *Unity's Elders' Conference*.

All matters, which are not assigned to one or other of these departments, such as the filling of offices, the conducting of the Diaspora work, &c. are to be cared for by the Unity's Elders' Conference as a whole.

All subjects, which do not fall under the head of current business, are only prepared in the department to which they belong, and are finally laid for consideration before the whole Conference, by which all resolutions are taken and carried into effect.

With reference to the increase of labour anticipated from the more frequent visitations required, the Unity's Elders' Conference will in future have four members in each department, and consequently twelve members in all. Besides this, the Warden and Mission departments are empowered, as heretofore, to admit the Directors of their respective bureaux to their deliberations, and also to empower them to execute special commissions.

§ 61. *Election of the Unity's Elders' Conference.*

At the beginning of each General Synod the Unity's Elders' Conference lays down its office, and resigns its powers into the hands of the Synod, which, before the conclusion of its sessions, chooses a new Unity's Elders' Conference according to the following rules:—

(1.) The members of the former Unity's Elders' Conference, are re-eligible.

(2.) For a valid election there must be at least an absolute majority.

(3.) The manner in which the election shall be confirmed by lot is left to each Synod to determine.

§ 62. *Mode of filling vacancies in the Unity's Elders' Conference between two Synods.*

When a vacancy occurs in the Unity's Elders' Conference in the interval between two Synods, it will be filled with little deviation from the method hitherto adopted. The Unity's Elders' Conference will call upon the Elders' Conferences for their proposals. The relative proportion of these proposals or votes remains the same until the next General Synod; *i.e.* the Elders' Conferences of the European Continent will have 16; the Elders' Conferences and labourers of the congregations of Great Britain and Ireland, 12; those of the northern District of America, 8; and those of the southern District, 3; together for America, 11. The manner of apportioning and taking the votes in the several Provinces is as follows:—

(1.) On the Continent of Europe the Elders' Conferences of the 15 place-congregations will each have a vote, which with one vote from the conference of Berlin and Rixdorf makes together, 16. The Committees will take a share in these votes by each choosing two of its members to join the brethren of the respective Elders' Conferences.

Note. The Committees of Berlin and Rixdorf will each choose one brother for the above purpose.

(2.) The votes of the British Province will be sent in after the manner appointed by the Synod of 1848, with the reservation, that the next Provincial Synod is empowered, if deemed by it desirable and feasible, to make a new apportion-

ment, and to admit one or more members of the Committees to take part with the Conferences and labourers in the voting.

Apportionment of Votes.

Elders' Conference at Fulneck	1
Labourers of the congregations at Gomersal, Mirfield, Wyke, and Baildon	1
General Elders' Conference of Fairfield, Dukinfield and Salem	1
Elders' Conference at Ockbrook, and Labourers at Woodford and Leominster	1
Elders' Conference in London, and Labourer at Devonport	1
Elders' Conference at Bedford, and Labourers at Kimbolton and Pertenhall	1
Elders' Conference in Bristol, and Labourer at Kingswood	1
Elders' Conference at Bath, and Labourers at Tytherton and Malmesbury	1
Elders' Conference at Gracehill, and Labourer at Gracefield	1
Labourers of the congregations at Ballinderry, Kilkeel, Cootehill, and Kilwarlin	1
Labourers in Dublin, Ayr, and Haverfordwest	1
Provincial Elders' Conference	1

(3.) For the American Province:—

The apportionment of votes and manner of taking them in the two Districts is to be determined by the next Provincial Synods;—meanwhile it is left to the respective Procial Elders' Conferences.

The three departments of the Unity's Elders' Conference will each have two votes, making six votes in all, for the Unity's Elders' Conference.

The total number of proposals or votes will amount to 45.

Each of these proposals should contain the names of three brethren; yet, in case of a lack of names, the voter need not mention more than one or two.

The Unity's Elders' Conference is again commissioned and authorized by the Synod to complete the election, with a reference to the proposals sent in, and in accordance with the decision of the lot. A minute of the proceeding is to

be drawn up by one of the secretaries, and signed by all the members present.

Before a question by lot can be asked concerning a brother, he must have been named in at least one-third of the lists of proposals sent in.

The brother who is elected to the vacant place, according to the above mentioned minute, takes his seat as a member of the Unity's Elders' Conference, in the department where the vacancy has occurred.

When the election is completed and confirmed by lot, the Unity's Elders' Conference will send a report, containing the number of votes which each brother has received, and the manner of completing the election, to the Elders' Conferences of the European Continent, and to the Provincial Elders' Conference of the other Provinces, that they may communicate the same to the voters.

The Unity's Elders' Conference cannot create a vacancy by giving one of its number an appointment elsewhere; although any member may resign his seat, and the Unity's Elders' Conference is at liberty to bring about such a resignation on the part of one of its members.

D. THE PROVINCIAL ELDERS' CONFERENCES.

§ 63. *Directing Boards of the separate Provinces.*

The chief board of administration in all matters which concern the separate Provinces as such, is, for each, its Provincial Elders' Conference; a name which appears more appropriate to the new functions given to these conferences than the one heretofore used, (Provincial Helpers' Conference).

It is to be chosen in the constitutional manner determined upon by the respective Provinces. It is responsible to the Provincial Synod, and accountable to it for its administration.

§ 64. *Duties and Functions of a Provincial Elders' Conference.*

A Provincial Elders' Conference has a twofold duty.

(1.) It has, in connection with the Unity's Elders' Conference, to take care that the resolutions of the General Synods are conscientiously carried out.

(2.) Independently of the Unity's Elders' Conference,— unless where, and in as far as, one or another Provincial Synod has established a dependent relationship between the Provincial Elders' Conference and Unity's Elders' Conference,— the chief direction and administration, in conformity with the rules and principles laid down by each Provincial Synod, of all concerns which are provincial, and which, as such, belong to the incumbencies of Provincial Synods. Connected with this :—

X (3.) The appointment and oversight of the Labourers and servants of the Province, and

(4.) The calling together of Provincial Synods in urgent cases.

§ 65. *Special Regulations for the respective Provinces, inserted for the purpose of Reference.*

To those regulations of general application we append the following which relate to the Provincial Elders' Conferences of individual Provinces, and which, having been resolved upon by the recent Synods of these Provinces, have received the sanction of the General Synod. These can be altered by each succeeding Provincial Synod.

(A.) The following rules are in force for the Provincial Elders' Conference of the northern District of the American Province.

Their duties are :—

(a.) To appoint one of their number to act as President.

(b.) To see that the enactments of General Synods are faithfully carried out in the Province.

(c.) To appoint and control all ministers and other servants of the Province.

Note. An exception is to be made in the case of the first professor of the Theological Seminary, who may be appointed directly by the Provincial Synod. *int*

(d.) To convene Provincial Synods in cases of emergency.

(e.) To administer the government of the church in the Province generally, under such rules and regulations as shall be adopted from time to time by Provincial Synods.

(B.) The following rules are in force for the Provincial

Elders' Conference of the southern District of the American Province :—

At the Provincial Synods, which are to be regularly held every six years, two members of the Executive Board are to be chosen by ballot, which Board is called the Provincial Elders' Conference, and is responsible to the Provincial Synod in all local matters.

The Provincial Elders' Conference shall consist of three members.

(1.) The President, who may be chosen from any part of the Unity, who, as a general rule, is to hold no other office.

(2.) A member, to be chosen from the Labourers in the District, whether in or out of office.

(3.) The Administrator of the Unity's estates in Wachovia, appointed by the Unity's Elders' Conference.

Vacancies in the Provincial Elders' Conference, occurring in the interval between two of the regular Provincial Synods, are to be filled by a Provincial Synod specially called for that purpose.

The Provincial Elders' Conference has to see to it that the general rules and principles of the Unity as established by the General Synods of the Church, as well as the special rules and regulations made by Provincial Synods, be faithfully carried out in the manner appointed by the Provincial Synods. It has, further, to take the oversight of our Educational Institutions and of the Finances connected with the Sustentation Fund, as well as to watch over and direct the affairs of the District generally.

(C.) Special Regulations for the Provincial Elders' Conference of the British Province.

The relations of the Provincial Elders' Conference to the Unity's Elders' Conference remain as they are at present, *i.e.* the former is subordinate and responsible to the latter in every respect, so that appeals to the Unity's Elders' Conference are allowed as hitherto. The members of the Provincial Elders' Conference lay down their office at each Provincial Synod, which shall elect by majority of votes a new board, consisting of three brethren. The former members are re-eligible. Two-thirds of the votes are required to make the election valid.

One of the elected members is appointed President by the Unity's Elders' Conference.

In case of a vacancy occurring in the Provincial Elders' Conference, between two Provincial Synods, it is to be filled up by the Unity's Elders' Conference, according to the votes of the Labourers of the Province, together with a vote of each congregation committee. An absolute majority of the votes is required to make the election valid.

(D.) The Unity's Elders' Conference will discharge the office of Provincial Elders' Conference, for the European Continental Province until the next General Synod.

§ 66. *Relation of a Provincial Elders' Conference to the Elders' Conferences and Labourers of the Province.*

Each Elders' Conference and each congregation Labourer, standing alone, must keep up a constant correspondence with the Provincial Elders' Conference of the respective Province. It must be consulted on all matters of importance, and on those which are of unusual occurrence. A Provincial Elders' Conference can never take direct action in the special affairs of a congregation and its members, but only in agreement with, and through the Elders' Conference, or the Board to which more immediately belongs the direction of the congregation.

§ 67. *Intercourse of the individual Members of a Congregation with the Provincial Elders' Conference or Unity's Elders' Conference.*

All brethren and sisters are at liberty to apply direct to a member of the Provincial Elders' Conference in their concerns, or to communicate their observations. They must, however, remember that these conferences cannot form any judgment, or take any steps, without having previously made inquiries in the proper place, and heard all sides. Whenever a formal letter of accusation, with signatures annexed, is presented to the Provincial Elders' Conference, that board, if it entertain the application at all, is bound to furnish the party or parties accused with a copy of such document, in the event of its being expressly required.

The above-mentioned right is also open to the brethren and sisters in reference to the Unity's Elders' Conference; but such memorials only can be entertained, the matter of which belongs to the recognized duties of that board.

§ 68. *Official Visits of the Provincial Elders' Conferences.*

It is expected of Provincial Elders' Conferences, in order that they may better discharge the duty of watching over the outward and spiritual course of the congregations, that they commission one of their body from time to time to hold official visitations. The visiting brother will seek to become acquainted as thoroughly as possible with the course of a congregation, partly through conversation with the individual labourers of the congregation, partly by meeting the Elders' Conference and Committee, and partly by visiting from house to house and speaking with the brethren and sisters individually, or giving them an opportunity of seeing him in private.

While one object of such visitations is mutual acquaintance and the encouragement of both congregation and labourers, another equally important one must not be overlooked, viz. to ascertain whether all things are conducted as they should be, in a right spirit, as becomes a congregation of Jesus, and according to the rules established by the church; and further to ascertain, whether the relation of the labourers to each other and to their congregation is what it ought to be, and whether each is discharging faithfully the duty assigned to him.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, it is right for us to remind each other, that, however faithfully those brethren, who have the oversight of the whole church and of its several parts, may discharge their duty, it remains ever true: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." (Ps. cxxvii. 1.) Therefore we will lift up our eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh our help. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep." (Ps. cxxi. 4.)

Appendix. No. 1.

At the election which took place on the 20th of August, the following twelve brethren were appointed members of the Unity's Elders' Conference.

(1.) For the Helpers' and Education department:—

The Brethren John Martin Nitschman.
 Charles Frederick Schordan.
 Charles William Jahn.
 Gustavus Theodore Tietzen.

(2.) For the Wardens' department:—

Christian William Matthiesen.
 John Ballein.
 Gustavus Theodore Reichel.
 Hermann Ludolph Mentz.

(3.) For the Missions' department:—

Henry Rudolph Wullschlaegel.
 Ernest Frederick Reichel.
 Godfrey Andrew Cunow.
 Levin Theodore Reichel.

Appendix. No. 2.

In reference to the time of holding the next General Synod, the present Synod has resolved:—That, if circumstances do not urge an earlier meeting, it will be the duty of the Unity's Elders' Conference, after ten years have elapsed, to take into consideration the calling of a General Synod, and to fix the time of meeting according to direction by lot. The Unity's Elders' Conference will also determine the *place* of meeting.

CHAPTER VII.

BRETHREN'S CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR CONSTITUTION.

“Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

EPH. v. 25, 27.

It is not in vain that the Scriptures present us with such a picture of the Church of God; for we are thereby seriously admonished to give all diligence in attaining conformity to so glorious a pattern, following after holiness, without which no man can see the Lord, or be well pleasing in his sight. We shall never, it is true, arrive at such a state, that no

insincere or lifeless members are to be found among us, nor any imperfections or weaknesses perceptible in those who are faithful; but though it be impossible to present the appearance of a *perfect* church, we may, and ought to become a *living* congregation, in which the Spirit of Christ bears the sway, triumphing over all opposing powers and influences, and manifesting his presence by his excellent gifts and graces.

A true church of God ought to accredit itself, not merely by a few, but by an overwhelming majority of its members. The tares should be choked by the wheat. The prevailing spirit of a genuine congregation of Jesus should not endure any thing averse to it, but either expel, or—what is more glorious, and more accordant with the mind of Christ—subdue it, and draw every heart, through the power of Divine grace, into the holy and happy communion of the children of God.

It is not so much the occurrence of occasional outbreaks of sin and depravity, dishonouring as they are to the congregation, which fills us with grief, as the conviction, that this living spirit is, generally speaking, so little perceptible amongst us. We are humbled before the Lord, when we discover, on serious examination, that our state is very different from what it ought to be, and might be, considering the richness of the grace vouchsafed and promised to us. May our Saviour cause our humiliation to be accompanied with genuine and heartfelt sorrow, and with a thorough sense of our poverty and sinfulness. Every vain imagination and all false peace will thus be destroyed; a longing for the pardon of our sin, and for the experience of new grace will be awakened; and we shall be animated by a firm and fixed determination, which his strength will enable us to carry into effect, to become more and more exclusively his property.

§ 69. *Congregations.*

The Congregations of the Brethren consist of three classes, *viz.*, Settlement congregations, or Congregation places; Town and Country congregations; and Congregations connected with Settlements, but not resident in them. The members of the first class dwell in separate settlements, or in a district or part of a town distinct from that of the other

inhabitants. The members of the second class live scattered in a city, town, or village, and form together a religious community, under the direction of the Brethren, having its own labourer and place of worship. The members of the third class reside at various distances from each other, in the neighbourhood of Settlements, with which they are ecclesiastically connected, enjoying the same ministry, pastoral care, and religious ordinances.

As regards the main calling of our Church, there is no difference between these classes, however distinct in some respects they may be. The care of souls, the discipline of the church, and those regulations which serve to promote a godly life and conversation, are the same in all; nor can these ecclesiastical features be dispensed with in any case, although they may be adapted to the various circumstances of our congregations, in the three provinces of the Unity.

The exercise of the greatest caution is urgently recommended by the Synod to all Elders' Conferences and Committees, in the case of those who apply for permission to join the congregation. They must be carefully examined as to the purity of their motives; nor can any applicant be admitted, unless he has previously made himself acquainted as thoroughly as possible with the doctrine, constitution, and essential peculiarities of our Church, and expressed his concurrence with them.

§ 70. *Division of the Congregation into Choirs.*

The object contemplated by the division of our congregations into choirs, according to the difference of age, sex, and condition, is, that every relation of life may be hallowed to the Lord. Experience has taught us, that where these natural divisions are thus clearly marked, individuals are more forcibly reminded of the calling and duties peculiar to their station, and at the same time enabled to enjoy more fully the blessings pertaining to it. In this matter the Holy Scriptures are our guide. They contain many passages which have direct reference to the varied relations and circumstances of human life, and afford to each choir-division those doctrines and precepts, which, if received and followed, will secure the full enjoyment of that great salvation, which has been purchased for all.

Each choir regards itself as a part of the congregation,

which has *one* common foundation and *one* common aim; but still more, the members of the respective choirs are specially bound together by the tie of similar circumstances and experiences, which draws them into union with each other, and summons them to join in a covenant of friendship and love in the Lord, the renewal of which is the peculiar blessing to be sought for in our *choir festivals*. Nor has that blessing been withheld by the great Head of the Church, who makes good, in the experience of his followers, the saying of the Apostle, "Now are they many members, but one body. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." (1 Cor. xii. 20, 26.)

Our *choir meetings* also are intended to encourage us in the faithful discharge of our special duties, and in pressing forward to secure the prize set before us; and also, to be a means of comfort and strength amid the cares and trials, which are incident and peculiar to every station of life. The servants of the congregation should endeavour to keep these objects in view, in their addresses to the several choirs, and seek the needful gifts for so important a purpose from the Giver of all good.

The Synod considers it desirable to repeat the remark, that *choir meetings and discourses should be regularly held*, and, that whilst the spirit of joy and thanksgiving should characterize our choir festivals, too great prominence should not be given to the outward demonstration of this feeling, lest the inward joy and rejoicing in the Lord should be thereby impaired, or even destroyed.

§ 71. *Choir Principles.*

Every choir has its peculiar fundamental rules or principles, which may be thus explained.

The example of our Lord and Saviour, in whose holy and meritorious life we discern the true pattern of a sanctified humanity, supplies us with those laws for holy living, which are applicable to all our choirs. His subjection to his earthly parents, (Luke ii. 51,) and his devotedness to his heavenly Father's business, (Luke ii. 46,) point out to our children their duty; whilst his humility, modesty, and chastity, furnish a special lesson and example to our older youths.

Our single brethren, imitating that perfect resignation to the will of the Father, which led him to live in retirement until his thirtieth year, should care for the things that belong to the Lord, how they may please the Lord, (1 Cor. vii. 32,) being prepared to serve him where and how he may appoint, (John xii. 25, 26,) and to glorify him in body and spirit which are his. (1 Cor. vi. 20.)

Our single sisters, also, should consider it a privilege, that their unmarried state is so favourable to an undisturbed pursuit of their heavenly calling; and regard it as a constant admonition, to cultivate that purity of heart, and that devotedness of spirit to the Saviour, which the Scriptures portray under the image of a chaste virgin. (2 Cor. xi. 2. Rev. xiv. 4.)

If our married brethren and sisters are one in the Lord, (1 Cor. vii. 39,) they should find the true and impressive pattern of their union, in the relation which subsists between Christ and his Church, whereby they are taught the necessity of forbearing affection on the one hand, (Col. iii. 19,) and of loving submission on the other, (Col. iii. 18,) that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in them. Every married pair should regard themselves as representing the Church of God; and should specially lay to heart the apostolic admonition, (1 Cor. vii. 29—31,) that they who have wives be as though they had none; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it.

Our widowed choirs, after the example of Jesus, should realize in their daily experience, as Jesus did, that though solitary and lonely, they are not alone, because the Father is with them, (John xvi. 32;) and consider their state as calculated to promote a special confidence in God, both as to their spiritual state and their external circumstances, as well as a continuance in supplications and prayers night and day. (1 Tim. v. 3.)

§ 72. *The Married Choir and its Duties.*

It is of the utmost importance for the spiritual and temporal prosperity of the church, that our married choirs, which constitute its main strength, should proceed in a Christian and congregational course.

Each married pair should present an image of Christ and

his Church ; each family should be a household of God, the heads of which are invested with a priestly office, which they are called on to discharge with reverence ; and the whole choir should be a pattern to the rest of the congregation, in all holy conversation and godliness.

It is also requisite, for the prosperity of each individual family, that the parents concur in the determination, " We and our house will serve the Lord ;" regarding their children as his property ; bringing them up in his nurture and admonition, not only by precept, but also by the power which lies in example, and in the influences of a household regulated according to the mind of Christ ; and kept free from all that is polluting and debasing. When our children see that their parents live to the Lord, that they are diligent in prayer, and in the faithful use of the means of grace afforded them in our communion, and derive from thence power to lead a godly life, it cannot fail to have a happy influence upon them, and they will be easily led to a child-like intercourse with our Saviour, and a determination to live for him and his people. It cannot indeed be denied, that the cares and anxieties peculiar to the married state are often very oppressive, and tend to draw away the thoughts from the one thing needful ; yet even here our Saviour's words will be found true by all who comply with them : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Nor will we forget, that even these perplexities and trials, if we do not resist the Holy Spirit of God, will be the means of leading us *to* the Saviour, instead of *from* him, as well as of exercising and strengthening our faith.

§ 73. *Marriages.*

If we are to conduct ourselves in the marriage state so as to be well pleasing to God, the union must be concluded " in the Lord." We cannot, therefore, too earnestly recommend to our brethren and sisters, in this important and decisive step in life, not to suffer themselves to be led astray by inclination and passion, or by respect to outward advantages, but to look up to the Lord with fervent prayer for his guidance.

The Synod regards it as the duty of all who belong to the congregation to apprise the Elders' Conference or

labourer of their intention to enter into the married state. It also recommends Provincial Synods to adopt definite and Scriptural regulations in the matter; and especially to see to it, that even in those countries where the rite is admissible simply as a civil compact, the union may not be unaccompanied by the impartation of the Church's blessing.

The marriages of the *servants* of the Church require the sanction of the Unity's Elders' Conference, or of the Provincial Elders' Conference. It is the duty of these Conferences duly to examine the marriage proposals of such brethren, with reference to their future office, and to the service of the congregation, and, if they have serious doubts on the subject, to withhold their concurrence. The Synod repeats the admonition, that those brethren who are called to the service of the church, should, in their choice of a companion for life, have special regard to her official usefulness; and the sisters should ever bear in mind, that by giving their hand to a servant of the church, they enter themselves into the Lord's service, and should earnestly seek his aid to enable them faithfully to discharge the duties of their calling.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."—1 COR. xiv. 40.

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."—1 COR. xiv. 33. See also EPH. iv. 15, 16. 1 COR. xii. 26.

§ 74. *Nature and Object of Church Discipline.*

THE descendants of the ancient Brethren's Church, after the example of their ancestors and of apostolic times, established congregation discipline among themselves in the renewed Church, which they deemed so essential for the maintenance of their union, that they were prepared, at the commencement of the congregation at Herrnhut, to forsake

all, unless it were conceded to them. Subsequently, when new congregations were established, they included the free exercise of their discipline among the privileges sought for from various governments; and to this day it continues in undisturbed exercise, in all the states where our congregations exist.

In common with the ancient Brethren, we understand by the term church discipline, taken in its widest sense, the training of the individual members of the congregation for their calling of grace by means of its peculiar regulations and institutions, the most important of which is, the faithful care of souls, by administering serious admonitions and affectionate reproofs to those members, who do not deal strictly with themselves in their deviations, whether great or small, from the mind of Christ. In this respect the individual speaking preparatory to the holy Communion, has continued to approve itself a practice fraught with blessing, both at home and abroad. Its immediate object is, to lead to that self-examination which is so desirable before approaching the table of the Lord; but, at the same time, it serves to maintain a mutual confidential intercourse between the members of the several choirs and their respective labourers. Every thing therefore should be carefully avoided, that might render it unpleasant or burdensome. If rightly conducted, it will prove a blessed means of personal edification, not only to the members, but also to the labourers themselves; and for this cause, no one ought to decline this opportunity for free conversation on spiritual things. In cases, where difficulties in the way of this practice are presented, arising from distance of abode, or where this practice of individual speaking is no longer customary, pastoral visitation may supply its place; and it is urgently recommended, that the labourers approve themselves faithful in this important duty, encouraging friendly intercourse with themselves, and ministering to the spiritual necessities of every soul.

In a more limited sense of the word, church discipline denotes the various degrees of brotherly correction which are employed, when affectionate exhortations are fruitless, according to the directions given in Matt. xviii. 15—17; 1 Cor. v. 11—13; 1 Tim. vi. 3—5; 2 John 9, 10. The Synod found little to alter in previous regulations, but deemed it important to press on the attention of the congregations, as well as of their servants, the principles on which church

discipline is founded, and the manner in which it is to be applied.

Its first object is the strict maintenance of Christian character and conduct, that the congregation may not be disturbed in its course, or altogether drawn aside, by the prevalence of an improper spirit, from the mark set before it. It must be our concern therefore to check the inroads of corruption from their very commencement, and by timely measures to remove every thing that might lead the unwary astray. The second object of church discipline is, to guard the individual members from giving offence and falling into sin; to keep them in the right way; and when any one has departed from it, to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.

The different degrees of church discipline have reference to these two objects. For their attainment, it is necessary, that the servants of the congregation, aware of the great responsibility they would bring upon themselves by neglecting this important part of their calling, should attend to it with the utmost conscientiousness and fidelity. They must exercise all due watchfulness over the souls entrusted to their charge, and follow with the tenderest solicitude those who have transgressed or gone astray. It behoves them also to be on their guard, lest they should be prevented by the fear or favour of man, from acting, when necessary, with firmness, and with that impartiality which the word of God enjoins. If, however, the servants of the congregation are to exercise discipline with effect and blessing, they must have the faithful and decided support of the congregation itself. Should they stand alone, or have the spirit of the congregation against them, it is impossible that any beneficial results can be produced.

§ 75. *Exercise of Discipline in the general sense of the term.*

In its widest signification, church discipline is exercised by means of the public proclamation of the Divine word, as well as by the mutual brotherly admonitions and warnings of the members themselves. The more powerfully the preached word affects the hearts of our hearers, the less need will there be for corrective discipline, and the more easy will it be to exercise it effectually. Indeed, were we all baptized with the Spirit from above, and kept under His

sanctifying influence, it would be rendered altogether unnecessary: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

Faults and deviations will certainly at all times occur, and in their treatment, brotherly love, which precedes all discipline, and constitutes its very source, has its proper sphere. This love, instead of confining itself to the relief of temporal distress, seeks its first object in the spiritual welfare of the members of the congregation. "If a man be overtaken in a fault," or is observed to be in an unsatisfactory state of heart, "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." (Gal. vi. 1.) A word spoken in kindness, even though it convey reproof, finds access to the heart, and much injury to the soul may thus be obviated before it has had time to spread; "thou hast gained thy brother." His restoration, however, can only be really secured when love is the animating principle of our admonitions,—that love which "suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." (1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.) Much harm may be done by manifesting intemperate zeal, and acting in our own spirit.

When transgressions occur of such a nature that they ought not to be passed over in silence, but require to be notified to the labourers or conferences of the congregation, it is the duty of every member, who is aware of any thing inconsistent or criminal, to render a timely exercise of discipline possible, by a candid and truthful communication. At the same time, every thing like tale-bearing or calumny, which are ranked in Scripture with heinous sins, is to be carefully guarded against. When it is requisite to prove the truth of a charge, and especially when the individual accused expressly desires it, the name of the informant, and an opportunity for both parties to meet in the presence of the labourer, ought not to be withheld. With such cases, the exercise of church discipline in the *restricted* sense begins.

§ 76. *Exercise of Discipline in the restricted sense of the term.*

Of this exercise there are three degrees.

The first consists in the reproof which the pastor or choir labourer administers to those who have erred, in accordance with the duty which his office imposes upon him before the

Lord, and because he is the person to whom, on account of his spiritual office, his brethren naturally look for counsel; and can, therefore, the more easily, by a word of brotherly advice and warning, prevent any further offence or transgression. In order that this object may be attained, it is of the greatest importance, that his admonitions should be given, not only with becoming earnestness and fidelity, but also with humility and true affection. Let him speak as a brother to a brother, and the word which comes from a heart truly concerned for the soul's salvation of those committed to his care, as well as for the well-being of the congregation, will find a ready entrance, and instead of exciting bitterness, will prove a blessing. The manifestation of this spirit is perfectly compatible with the faithful discharge of duty, in the case of those who, in spite of serious derelictions, intend with light-minded indifference to partake of the holy communion. Such members must be seriously warned of the sin they commit, and of the sad consequences which an unworthy participation will ensure, as the word of God declares, and as many have experienced to their cost. It is the sacred duty of the pastor or choir labourer to give such a warning, but it does not amount to a suspension.

In event of graver transgressions, especially when they have become open and manifest, the *second* degree of church discipline must be put in force. Under such circumstances, delinquents are to be spoken with in presence of the Committee, according to the injunction of our Lord already quoted; "If thy brother will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the presence of two or three witnesses, every word may be established." (Matt. xviii. 16.) But in this case, also, it is of great moment to direct the attention of the transgressor to his inconsistent conduct, with love and seriousness, and to point out the way in which his error may be corrected, and its evil consequences obviated.

Instances may however occur in which exclusion from the holy communion must immediately take place, both from regard to the state of heart betrayed by the offender, and from the respect which is due to the congregation itself. The Elders' Conference must decide on this point in every case, in accordance with the Scripture which says; "And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfect-

ing of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 11, 12.) It is therefore *their* duty to watch over the spiritual interests of the church, and if necessary to exercise severe discipline in the spirit of fidelity and love.

This suspension from the communion, which is not to be confounded with the caution against partaking of the Lord's supper given in private, as mentioned above, is a milder degree of discipline than exclusion from the congregation, and may be resorted to in particular cases, even where open offence has been given by sinful practices; but only where an unfeigned repentance is manifested, and a real change of heart may be hoped for. Intent as we ought to be, by faithful pastoral care, to prevent the occurrence of such offences, it would be a mistaken and injurious forbearance, were we, from personal considerations or a false tenderness, to refrain from exercising this discipline when necessary.

The same remarks apply to the last form in which church discipline is to be exercised, viz.: *Exclusion from the congregation*. Should no improvement be witnessed after milder measures have been resorted to, but the erring member persist in his evil ways, obstinately resisting our rules, and proving a stumbling-block to others, his exclusion from the church must necessarily take place. A similar course must be pursued with those who fall into gross sins of such a nature, that the name of Christ is thereby evil spoken of, according to the rule of the Apostle: "Put away from among you that wicked person," (1 Cor. v. 13;) and in cases where such delinquents have proved themselves the seducers of others, they ought, if practicable, to be removed from the settlement. But even under such circumstances, we would still act under the influence of compassionate love, and not at once, and in every case, insist on such an extreme measure.

When it is observed, that the spirit manifested by the congregation, and the warning testimony of established members, have no other object than the recovery and restoration of excluded persons, a beneficial result may be hoped for; more especially should the labourers, as in duty bound, interest themselves on their behalf, making use of every opportunity to bring them into the way of repentance and salvation, and exhorting their congregations to aid them in their efforts, by all prayer and supplication.

The truly penitent sinner we will most heartily forgive, as Christ has forgiven us.

In order that the congregation may be placed in a proper relation to those who have gone astray, as soon as their delinquency is known, the Synod resolved, that cases of exclusion should not only be determined on with the concurrence of the Committee, but should be mentioned to the whole congregation in an appropriate way, at a suitable meeting. On such an occasion, if the offender be recommended in heartfelt prayer to the faithful care of the good Shepherd, who follows his wandering sheep even into the depths of the wilderness, a blessing may be surely expected; and the congregation will be reminded of their duty to remember others, in their supplications at a throne of grace.

But in proportion as we are bound to treat such painful cases with special seriousness and decision, it becomes the solemn duty of the Elders' Conference to proceed in every case with the utmost conscientiousness, impartially weighing all circumstances, and earnestly praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Whenever the hope can be entertained that suspension from the communion will of itself, with the Lord's blessing, be sufficient to lead the offender to sincere repentance, and will constitute a sufficient expression of the judgment of the congregation, we should not resort to so painful a measure as exclusion from the church.

It is true, that in the exercise of church discipline, the grossest and most heinous sins may escape the visitation they deserve, because they are secretly practised, and nothing can be a greater trouble or trial to the church. Such a burden, however, must be endured, after the example of Him who suffered a Judas to remain in the circle of the disciples, although he knew him, and pronounced his judgment; and eventually hypocrisy will be visited, as in his case, with a double damnation. Far better is it that failings and transgressions should be brought to light, for though an offender may thus be subjected to church discipline, an evidence of the sincerity of his repentance will be manifested in this, that he submits to it in a right spirit, although he is conscious there may be others in the congregation, on whom it is not exercised, though in reality they are far more culpable.

It not unfrequently happens that there are those amongst us, who, though in no wise proper subjects for church disci-

pline, yet, on account of the dead state of their hearts, neither understand nor enjoy the privileges of the congregation. Such members are necessarily a cause of sadness and grief; but as long as they cannot resolve to leave the church, provided they act in accordance with our congregation rules, doing no injury to others by their walk and conversation, we will patiently bear with them. Those, however, who feel no attachment to the church, and to whom our rules appear rigid and burdensome, are to be affectionately admonished to leave the congregation. Such a separation, which is not to be confounded with exclusion from the church, may also be the best resource, when members, who are otherwise of unexceptionable character, declare, in a proper spirit, that they cannot concur in our church regulations and rules.

Such cases, though differently characterized, agree in this, that they are cases of separation from the Brethren's Church, and not of exclusion from the Church of God, and are therefore to be carefully distinguished in the annual statistics of the respective congregations.

§ 77. *Re-admission into the Congregation.*

The time for the re-admission of those who have been excluded from the holy communion, or from the congregation, must be determined by the Elders' Conference and Committee, who should act therein with the greatest circumspection. Our decision must be guided by such a judgment as close observation may enable us to form regarding the state of heart of the candidate for re-admission. The true evangelical combination of the tenderness with the strictness of love, will be made clear to us by the Lord and His Spirit, when we direct a searching look into our own corrupt hearts, and humble ourselves before Him as sinners who stand in need of daily forgiveness. External considerations of any kind ought never to determine the decision.

As the Synod resolved that the exclusion of fallen members is to be deliberated on conjointly by the Elders' Conference and Committee, and then mentioned to the adult members of the congregation at a suitable meeting, so it determined, that a similar course of proceeding is to be adopted when they are re-admitted.

§ 78. *Congregation Rules.*

Our Congregation rules are drawn up in accordance with the fundamental principles which regulate the whole Unity. The same church laws must therefore be embodied in the code of every congregation; but as respect must be had to local circumstances and requirements, it cannot be expected that there should be a perfect agreement in the details of congregation rules throughout the church. The Synod therefore anew decided, that every congregation is bound to subscribe to a certain code of regulations drawn up in accordance with the general principles of the church, and containing nothing contrary to the Synodal Results. These rules require the confirmation of the highest provincial authority before they can become valid. Special and particular regulations must be made by the Provincial Synods.

As regards the relation in which we stand to governments and the magistracy, we recognize it as a sacred duty to be in subjection to the higher powers, as ordained of God, and as being the ministers of God to us for good. (Rom. xiii. 4.) We also consider ourselves bound, as faithful and loyal subjects, conscientiously to obey the laws of the land in which the Lord has placed us, and to love and honour our rulers and governors. Care should therefore be taken to make known such new laws and regulations, as require attention and observance.

When, according to the laws of a country, we are required to take an oath, we cannot in all cases refuse to do so, as we are not in every country exempt from the obligation. It is sufficiently apparent, that the sacred observance of an oath must be regarded as one of the strongest obligations of conscience. We take an oath, only when it is absolutely required by the magistrate.

It is expected of every member of the congregation, to yield a willing obedience not only to the laws of the land, but also to all the regulations established amongst us. Far more than this, however, is required of us as true brethren and sisters, according to the commandments of God, and the laws of his house. We must carefully avoid whatever is calculated to prove injurious to our souls, or might give offence to others,—not being in any way conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds.

The Synod did not wish to lay down particular rules on the subject of worldly pleasures and amusements, but so much the more did it feel the paramount importance of declaring, that worldly-mindedness, vanity, covetousness, and the love of pleasure are irreconcilable with the true spirit of the congregation—exercise a very injurious influence upon it—and are calculated to draw it aside from that noble simplicity which should form the groundwork of its character. They ought therefore to find no entrance among us.

Still more pernicious in its consequences, is intemperance in the use of strong drink, which renders men in a special degree the servants of sin. We will therefore, as far as possible, endeavour individually to remove every thing that can furnish occasion for this evil, and give timely admonition and warning to those who may be exposing themselves to temptation.

In regard to dress, domestic arrangements, and the like, we would avoid every thing that transgresses the limits of simplicity; that can be termed luxurious or extravagant, and gives evidence of a vain worldly mind; or that may be injurious to health, or opposed to propriety. And, with regard to amusements, we would refrain from partaking of any of questionable character,—any concerning which a doubt can be reasonably entertained, whether they are proper for a child of God.

It is of importance to notice, however, that there is much pertaining to a truly Christian life and conversation, which can be comprehended in no fixed rules and directions. The letter of the law is not sufficient. It is the Spirit which quickeneth, which frees from the government of the flesh, and impresses the seal of sanctification on our whole life. If the Holy Ghost does but rule in our congregations, producing and sustaining the mind of Christ, and holiness to the Lord, a worldly spirit will be more effectually excluded and suppressed than could possibly be the case by the enforcement of the most stringent regulations. It is in this way, too, that the most valuable discipline will be exercised; not that which proceeds from conferences or labourers, but that which proceeds from the congregation itself, hallowed and devoted to the Lord.

Oh that we all may continually be impressed by those earnest admonitions of the Apostle, "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your

spirit, which are God's," (1 Cor. vi. 20;) and "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.)

CHAPTER IX.

SERVANTS OF THE CONGREGATION.

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."—1 COR. xii. 4—6.

§ 79. *Congregation Service in general, and the Servants of the Church in particular.*

A CONGREGATION of Jesus Christ constitutes *one* body, of which he is the Head. All its members should mutually aid each other, "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 16.) In the Unity of the Brethren, all those persons are to be regarded as servants of the congregation, who have been entrusted with any commission, or are charged with any duty on behalf of the church or of its choir-divisions. The conviction that we are serving the Lord and his people, gives value even to an apparently unimportant service, as well as to the whole of our activity, and, under its influence, whatsoever we do we do all to the glory of God.

In a more limited sense, however, we apply the Scripture terms *Servants and Labourers* to those who have been appointed Elders of the Congregation by the Unity's Elders' Conference, or Provincial Elders' Conference, and take the oversight of the spiritual and temporal welfare of the congregation, or of its schools and educational institutions, or attend to the ministry of the word and sacraments, the care of souls, or the management of the temporalities of the congregation.

§ 80. *Qualification for Service in the Brethren's Church.*

It is expected of the servants of the Lord and of the Church, that they be fully resolved to give themselves up with soul and body to this service. They should seek to gain a clear insight into the aim and calling of our community, and into all parts of our constitution, and a sound judgment as to the application of its rules to particular cases. But it is of still greater importance that they should possess those qualifications which the Spirit of God alone can dispense,—a mind deeply humbled under a sense of our Saviour's mercy, a cheerful spirit strengthened and elevated by his power, a heart filled with his love, an ear attentive to the guiding, warning, and reproving voice of the Spirit of God, a diligence in working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and an earnest desire for the salvation of those among whom they have to labour,—that they may act according to the mind of Christ and his Church, and, while attending to their office, not to forget the care of their own hearts. They must not seek their own, but that which is the Lord's. They must “feed the flock of Christ, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” They must bear in mind, that as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, they are not merely judged by men, but are accountable to the Chief Shepherd for their official conduct and ministerial faithfulness, for all their words and actions, and likewise for the souls committed to their charge. (1 Cor. iv. 1—5. Heb. xiii. 17. Ezek. xxxiii. 7—9.) They must not allow themselves to be influenced by the fear of man or the desire of human approbation, nor to shun the reproach of Christ. They ought to regard all faithfulness in their official engagements as a gift, not as merit. Does the Lord crown their labours with his blessing, they should only feel the more humbled under a sense of their unworthiness; is there no apparent fruit, they should examine themselves as to their negligence, but not yield to despondency in their work; on the contrary, let them abide strong in hope and silent waiting on the Lord, who alone can give success. All their power and strength must come from Him, their great pattern, who was among his disciples as one that serveth. They must learn of Him, and derive from Him whatever they need for their own hearts and for their official duties.

§ 81. *Relation of Labourers to their Congregations.*

The proper relation of Labourers towards their congregations, if they are to succeed in their official engagements, is that of mutual confidence. Where this is the case, and there alone, the care of souls will prosper, the preached Gospel will bring forth fruit, church discipline will produce a salutary effect, and every appearance of separate interests on the part of the congregation and its labourers will vanish. In order to bring about this confidential intercourse, both sides must do their part ;—the labourers, by bearing in mind the words of our Saviour: “ One is your Master, and all ye are brethren;” by dealing with their congregations in a frank and open spirit ; by manifesting an affectionate and cordial sympathy in their temporal and spiritual welfare ; by avoiding all that might give offence or alienate their affection ; all that looks like pride or the assumption of superiority ; by cultivating an humble loving spirit, under the influence of which each esteems the other better than himself ; in all things approving themselves servants of Christ, to whom to love and be beloved is an indispensable necessity.

On other hand, the members of the flock will do well not to prejudge their labourers, nor to expect from them an impossible perfection, nor to form their estimate of them by their gifts and exterior advantages ; but, satisfied with perceiving in them a sincere desire to perform their duties, according to the mind of Christ, and as in his sight, to make allowance for their weaknesses, and bear with them in love, according to the exhortation of the Apostle :—“ We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake ; and be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thess. v. 12, 13.) It must be acknowledged that no small measure of grace is required to produce this lovely and cordial union. Outward affability—mere friendliness of deportment—will not suffice : for if the amicable relation have no deeper root than this, it will be disturbed on the first occasion, when the labourer finds it necessary, in the exercise of his duty, to administer reproof. What is needed for this purpose, is the deep consciousness that all are labourers in one cause, and serving one Master. There needs—and

this constitutes the bond of our union,—that all should be possessed of spiritual life; and, for the daily sustenance of this life, should feel the necessity of feeding on *one* bread, and drinking at *one* fountain; thus advancing unitedly in the same path, and seeking more and more fully to apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. This is the bond which unites us as Brethren, nor is there any earthly bond to be compared to it.

Hence, wherever this cordial union of heart does not exist, there is evidently, on one side or other, a lack of spiritual life and its requirements, and, consequently, of that attraction which draws believing souls to one common centre. This living impulse, however, can proceed from the Spirit of God alone. Let it, therefore, be the petition of all his servants, who would wish to yield fruit to their Lord, that he would impart this grace both to themselves and those committed to their care; and let it be the daily prayer of all faithful members of our covenant, that the Lord would himself prepare, as instruments to execute his work, servants and handmaids who are alive to God, and gladly dedicate their powers to the service of Him who bought them with his precious blood. If thus the labourers of the Church, deeply convinced of the value of unfeigned brotherly love, feeling their own weakness, but with eyes uplifted to the Lord, covenant with their brethren and sisters, to live to Him,—if

—All in spirit are agreed
 To follow Jesus as his flock,
 To build on him, our only rock,
 And on the path of life proceed;—

then assuredly the Lord will vouchsafe his blessing, and help us to fulfil the New Testament command of love, and all around will know that we are his disciples.

§ 82. *Responsibility of Labourers.*

No Labourer of the Brethren's Unity occupies an independent position, but each one is subordinate to the Elders' Conference of the place where he resides, or has associated with him a Committee whom he may consult, and all alike are accountable for the execution of their trust, to the Unity's Elders' Conference, or the Provincial Elders' Conference, to whom they owe obedience.

The several Conferences instituted in the congregation, from its commencement, are intended to combine and call into exercise the diversified gifts of individuals for the common advantage, and the well-being of the whole. These united exertions, when inspired and animated by the true congregation spirit, are productive of the most blessed effects. It is desirable in this point of view that all members of conferences, all congregation or choir labourers, should be on terms of friendly intercourse, confer with each other regarding every circumstance of importance, and act together in unity of spirit, and with an essential agreement as to views and principles. Every office has its own sphere of activity, and no labourer should interfere with another in the performance of his peculiar duties. Nevertheless, all should draw in one yoke, and be truly united in heart; they should treat each other with mutual confidence, and consult together conferentially about every thing which does not belong to mere current business. This cordial union with each other, must not, however, give occasion to any severance of interests from the other members of the congregation, but only have in view the faithful execution of their calling, for which a close acquaintance with the whole congregation is likewise requisite. Should a labourer fall into errors, or be chargeable with improper conduct, his brethren should seek to restore him in the spirit of meekness; nor should he be unwilling to receive the admonitions of other brethren and sisters of the congregation. And let him not expect that his fellow-labourers shall, at all events, excuse his misconduct before the congregation, but let him confess it, as becomes a sinner among sinners.

§ 83. *Supply of Offices.*

The supply of offices in the congregations is committed by the Synod to the Unity's Elders' Conference, and Provincial Elders' Conference. In the execution of this important trust, it is expected of these conferences that, after conscientious examination, they shall propose only such brethren and sisters as possess the requisite qualifications of heart and mind, and with regard to whom there is reason to hope that they will gladly seek to learn, and to acquire under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, what the Lord expects from his servants. Regarding the mode of proceeding in

the supply of offices, further directions will be found in § 43.

In changes of labourers the Unity's Elders' Conference, and the Provincial Elders' Conference must take all the circumstances of the case into their most careful consideration and act accordingly, so that the good of the whole, and of individuals, may most effectually be promoted.

Whoever is imbued with the true spirit of a servant of the Lord, will take into conscientious consideration, every proposal made to him; he will come before his presence with prayer and supplication for the revelation of his good and holy will, and pay more regard to what he owes to our Saviour, to the congregation, and to his own soul, than to temporal comfort or convenience. It would prove our ruin, were a different way of thinking to prevail among us, and would contribute much towards depriving the labourers of the respect of the congregation.

It is just and proper, according to the declaration of Scripture, "the labourer is worthy of his hire," (Luke x. 7,) that the needful means should be furnished for his support, in order that he may be at liberty to devote his time and strength to the service committed to him.

When labourers or other persons engaged in the service of the Brethren's Church give occasion for complaint on the part of the brethren and sisters, the Unity's Elders' Conference or Provincial Elders' Conference will regard it as their duty, after making inquiry into the cause of the complaint, to give the needful admonitions. But in case they cannot continue to fill their office with the confidence and to the profit of the congregation, instead of waiting till an opportunity for their removal occurs, they must be recalled without delay, retiring from service on a pension, until an opportunity presents itself for their appointment elsewhere. Should an early opportunity at once present itself for the removal of such a brother, it cannot be permitted that the carrying out of the needful change should be impeded by his reluctance to accept it,—a reluctance caused by want of self-knowledge, or other insufficient grounds.

§ 84. *Poor's Fund.*

Although it is to be expected that, in a Christian congregation, those who are in better circumstances will, from the

impulse of their own hearts, readily come to the assistance of their poorer brethren, with charitable gifts, known to none besides, save Him "who seeth in secret," yet, according to the example of the apostolic churches, a more regular provision for the wants of the needy is desirable. This purpose our *Poor's Fund* is intended to serve.

All who have to do with the provision for the poor, should not only observe the secrecy required, but pray for a tender and sympathising heart, that, in the discharge of their commission, they may act according to the example of their Saviour.

And may He, who for our sakes became poor that through his poverty we might be made rich, go with them into the cottages of the poor, and not only bless these temporal gifts, but grant that none among us may come short of those heavenly riches which were gained for us by his poverty.

Note.—In consequence of the different requirements of the several Provinces of the Unity, the special regulations regarding the organization of our congregations have been transferred from the general Synodal Results to the Provincial Appendices.

CHAPTER X.

EDUCATION OF YOUTH.

"Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—
EPHES. vi. 4.

"Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."—
MATTH. xviii. 5.

§ 85. *Duties of Parents.*

THE Education of our children forms a very important branch of our calling to spread the kingdom of God; and the manner in which we engage in this sphere of labour will be one of the best evidences of the spiritual state of a congregation. It is the special duty of parents to instruct their children in divine knowledge, and the solemn consideration should be ever present to their minds, that the Lord has committed to them the care of immortal souls, whom they are to lead, by the help of his Holy Spirit, into the way of eternal life.

Parents ought to be guided by sanctified affection in their mode of treatment, considering the true welfare of their children, and not their momentary pleasure or discomfort. From this source should flow that untiring patience, and that affectionate earnestness, which, combined with a firm and uniform mode of treating the children, form the true basis of a good system of education. We should not forget that the Lord, in governing his ancient people, acted on the principle, that "the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth in nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all." (Gal. iv. 1.) And while we should avoid correcting children in anger, or with undue severity, and be guided in what we require of them by a tender regard to their bodily strength and mental capacities; yet, remembering the warning example of Eli, we should seek at an early age to subdue their self-will, give them every opportunity to practise self-denial, and accustom them to prompt obedience, strict subordination, and persevering industry.—Above all, we should endeavour to cherish in their minds strict conscientiousness in the execution of every duty; for although we cannot change the heart of our children, yet we may prepare the way for that change by cultivating in them such a tenderness of conscience.

If all parents among us were duly to consider this subject in all its importance, and bring up their children in the fear of the Lord, there would be less cause to mourn over the degeneracy of their offspring.

§ 86. *Home Education.*

The education which takes place under the parental roof, is of the greatest importance. For though school education must, in many respects, supplement the home one,—and it cannot be too carefully conducted,—yet it is a truth worthy of our most earnest consideration, that, in most cases, the foundation of the future good or evil conduct of a child is laid at home, and that the faults or defects which there develop themselves, are seldom or never remedied elsewhere. There is no doubt that the influence of the parent for good or evil, begins at a much earlier period than is generally supposed, and children are frequently more affected by what they casually see and hear, than by words and actions designed to impress their minds. A regard for the welfare of our offspring, and a fear of proving hurtful to these tender

plants, ought to serve as a powerful stimulus to us, to order our whole walk and conversation as becometh the gospel of Christ.

If all the domestic arrangements are regulated according to the mind of Christ;—if He rules in the hearts of the parents, and they obey the promptings of His Spirit in all they say or do in their children's presence, particularly in the remarks they make on others, and their behaviour towards servants and inferiors;—if they are led by the Spirit to pray, not only *for* but *with* their children, in their morning and evening devotions, as well as on special occasions;—a blessed influence will be exerted on their hearts, and they will, unconsciously, be led by the words and example of their parents, to their heavenly Friend and Saviour. Much too of the pernicious influence of work-people and servants on our children, which is often complained of, not without reason, will be obviated where domestic education is in proper train.

§ 87. *Infant-Schools.*

As most parents are prevented by the duties of their calling and employment from attending sufficiently to the care and instruction of their children, the Church has at all times considered it a duty, to come to their assistance in the important work of education. This may take place at an early period, from the third to the sixth year, by means of Infant-Schools.

Renewed experience, since the last Synod, has attested the value of these institutions, whether previously existing or recently commenced, and the present Synod can, therefore, do no other, than repeat the recommendations of them previously given. They may also serve as preparatory schools, in which instruction may be given to the elder classes in the elementary branches of knowledge. It must not, however, be forgotten, that the main object of these schools is, to employ the little ones by short and easy lessons, and to awaken their slumbering faculties;—not to burden the mind with premature attainments, at the expense of their health and of the free development of mind and body. A main requisite, no doubt, is a suitable teacher, fond of children, who can enter into their feelings, and understands how to manage and to interest them.

§ 88. *Place-Schools.*

A suitable arrangement of our Place-Schools, and care in the choice of teachers, are enjoined on the congregation-conferences. The minister, as school-director, has the superintendence of them,—a duty to which he should attend, as one of the most important belonging to his office. It is his incumbency to visit them frequently, during the school-hours, to converse with the teachers, to direct them to a proper method of instruction, and advise and encourage them, as occasion may require.

Where a separate school for congregation-children cannot be established,—as in town and country-congregations,—care should be taken to send the children to schools, in which Christian principles prevail,—and it is the duty of the minister to keep this in view.

The connection of our Day Schools with the Boarding Schools, and the assistance rendered by teachers from the latter, has worked beneficially, wherever it has been introduced.

§ 89. *Youth.*

We should greatly err, were we to regard the instruction, and more especially the training of our young people, as finished, when they have completed the years of childhood. Experience teaches us how necessary it is to build a good superstructure upon the foundation which has been laid. In every well-ordered congregation, arrangements should be made for the suitable care of the advancing youth. It would betoken indifference, were no measures taken on the part of the church, to shield the young,—in those critical years when headstrong passions awaken, and overflowing spirits often excite to levity,—from the destructive influences of the world, and of their natural corruption, and to lead them in the way of salvation.

In places where our choir arrangements still exist in blessing, the young have their special labourers and superintendents. Where this is no longer the case, evening schools, missionary associations, and other societies of a religious character, designed for mental and spiritual improvement, are strongly to be recommended. By such

means, under proper and suitable direction, much evil may be averted, and much good effected. Especially does it behove us not only to guard the young against pernicious influences, in regard to their daily conversation, their companionships, amusements, and above all, their reading,—but also to lead them to choose the good and true in all that is presented to them, and to loathe whatever is false and vile.

In the discharge of this duty, the ministers of the congregations should faithfully assist those who have the care of the young. It is also incumbent on the ministers to impart religious instruction suited to their age, to such of our youth as have left school, or to hold Bible classes with them.

Masters ought not to forget that their apprentices are entrusted to their care, in order to be thoroughly instructed in their trade, and are, therefore, not to be employed in domestic services. They ought, at the same time, to stand to them in the place of parents, and to care for their temporal and spiritual welfare.

And all adult members of the congregation have a responsibility resting on them with regard to the young, who naturally look up to them as patterns. By their intercourse and their example, they may either exercise a salutary influence upon them, or prove most grievous stumbling-blocks to them.

The Synod did not lose sight of the duty of the congregations towards young people, not belonging to us, but engaged in our service, particularly as apprentices and nursemaids. This class of persons justly deserves our careful consideration, not only on account of the influence they exert on our own young people, but also for their own sakes. Their masters and mistresses ought to take a cordial interest in their spiritual and temporal welfare, and have a duty to perform with regard to these strangers, no less than to our own young people.

At the same time, nothing conducive to their spiritual interests, and their acquisition of Scripture knowledge, should be omitted on the part of the congregation, the minister, and the choir-labourers.

§ 90. *Boarding-Schools.*

The education of children, whose parents do not belong to our Church, forms an important branch of our usefulness. A wide field of blessed activity is thus opened to us, extend-

ing far beyond the limits of our own Church. The Jubilee celebration of our educational institutions at Neuwied, Sept. 13th, 1856, was, at the same time, the centenary memorial of the commencement of this portion of the work assigned us by the Lord. On this occasion, the lively interest and affectionate testimonies of many former pupils of various ages and stations in life, from the east and west, and north and south, gave a most pleasing and encouraging proof that this labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

And a glance at the present state of our Boarding-schools,—in reference to the labours of the brethren and sisters engaged in them, as well as to the blessed results following those labours,—is calculated to encourage us to continue this work in confidence, as a work of the Lord, and to keep in view the main object of our educational establishments.

§ 91. *Object of our Boarding-Schools.*

Our boarding-schools may be regarded as missions among children, and their principal aim is, by means of a Christian education, to train our pupils not only for useful members of society, but, above all, for becoming partakers of eternal blessedness. Whatever tends to promote this object,—as Instruction meetings, Bible classes, morning and evening devotions, frequent conversations with the children on spiritual subjects, attendance at those meetings of the congregation which are suitable for them,—should be attended to with care and faithfulness.

But, above all, it is of importance that the teachers of our schools be animated by the love of Christ, and regard it as their principal duty to hallow their intercourse with the pupils, and the instructions which they impart, by doing all as unto the Lord in the spirit of Christian love. While we would earnestly endeavour to keep pace with other schools in imparting to our pupils a store of solid and useful knowledge, we would not aim at that extent and display of learning, which might excite them to vanity, destroy that simplicity of mind and buoyancy of spirit which are so essential to the success of our efforts, and lead us to neglect the proper regard for their health.

A second object which we must keep in view in our boarding-schools, is, by their means, to give the children of the congregation more comprehensive instruction and advan-

tages than they could otherwise obtain. Every facility should therefore be given them to attend these schools. This may be done, for instance, by a lower charge for their education. At the same time, care must be taken that they are not accustomed to a mode of living which they may not be able to continue in after life.

Gratifying as it is to see our schools keep up their numbers, yet if they become too large, the attention to the individual pupils, and that influence upon their hearts, which ought always to be our chief aim, will be rendered very difficult. It is therefore particularly desirable, that all overcrowding of the rooms in our schools should be avoided.

§ 92. *Teachers in our Schools.*

It ought to be a matter of first-rate importance with directors of boarding-schools to engage faithful and capable teachers. For the supply of female teachers, they will do well to train clever girls for this service, by lengthening their stay at school, and giving them opportunities for further practice and improvement in the attainments which they have already made.

Directors of schools and first teachers in our girls' schools are strictly charged to afford advice and support in all circumstances to those brethren and sisters who enter the school-service, and to introduce them to the duties of their important calling with judgment and due consideration for their personal character and talents, as well as for their health. In regard to our girls' schools, especially, they ought not to permit the teachers to enter the service too young, and should also take special care that their manifold occupations be properly arranged, lest their health be injured by having too great an amount of labour.

§ 93. *Unity's Educational Institutions.*

This designation comprises those higher educational institutions, in which the future servants of the Brethren's Church receive their classical training and preparation for service. The oldest of these are, the Theological Seminary at Gnadenfeld, and the Pædagogium at Nisky, the former of which celebrated its centenary Jubilee on the 18th of May, 1854. To the same class belong the more recent in-

stitutions in North America, namely, the Theological Seminary at Nazareth, and the Preparatory Class in connection with it. Lastly, there is in contemplation an Institution in the British province for the training of ministers for the home service, as well as of missionary candidates.

These institutions stand under the direction and management of the respective Provincial Synods, and Provincial Elders' Conferences. But they may be considered as Unity's Institutions, inasmuch as their importance to the whole Unity is undeniable; and the servants of the church who have been educated in them, may receive appointments beyond the limits of the Province in which they studied, and young men from one Province may either entirely, or in part, complete their studies in another, with permission of the Elders' Conference of the same. On this account, it is required that a clear and circumstantial report of each of these institutions, especially with regard to their internal condition, be presented to every General Synod, in order that all may benefit by the interchange of views and experiences, and that the General Synod may thus have an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion on the state of all these institutions, and of recommending the same to the attention of the respective Provincial authorities. For the same purpose, the means of becoming acquainted with the condition and progress of these institutions are to be afforded to visiting members of the Unity's Elders' Conference.

The present condition of the two first-mentioned institutions, the Pædagogium at Nisky, and the Seminary at Gnadenfeld, was such as to fill the Synod with humble thankfulness, and to inspire the joyful confidence that the Lord has not forsaken his people. We could not but regard the experiment of an extension of the period of study in the Seminary to three years, proposed by the last Synod, as successful. This arrangement is therefore to continue in force, except in cases where an earlier entrance on active service, and the consequent remission of a third year of study, is considered advisable by the Principal of the Seminary. The term of three years is not otherwise to be abridged, unless extraordinary exceptional causes should necessitate a departure from this rule.

The boys' boarding-school at Nisky is closely connected with the Pædagogium, and stands in the same relation to the directing authorities.

May our faithful and gracious God continue to preside over our whole educational activity, for the benefit of our congregations, or of others, with his grace and blessing. May He never suffer any Province of our Unity to be in want of brethren and sisters possessed of the needful qualifications, and willing to devote all their powers to his service; and may He especially long preserve to us in our Unity's educational institutions, an efficacious bond of mutual connection.

CHAPTER XI.

RELATION OF THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH TO OTHER PROTESTANT CHURCHES.—DIASPORA AND HOME MISSION.

“ Jesus should die,—that he might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”—JOHN xi. 51, 52.
 “ That they all may be one.”—JOHN xvii. 21.

§ 94. *Relation to other Protestant Churches.*

THE Brethren's Unity of ancient and modern times, though by its constitution and episcopal ordination forming a separate Church, has, nevertheless, at all times, professed to be but a part of the universal Church of which Christ is the Head, and more especially of the Evangelical or Protestant Church, whose doctrine is derived from the holy Scriptures, and from them alone. Hence the renewed Church of the Brethren has, at its Synods, repeatedly declared, and now renews its declaration of adherence to the Augsburg Confession in its twenty-one articles, as being the first and most generally received Confession of the Protestant Church, and as containing a simple and clear enunciation of the articles of the Christian faith; but, as has been already stated by former Synods, without wishing to bind the conscience of any one, especially in those countries where this Confession has no other value than as being the creed of one among many churches enjoying equal rights and liberty. We acknowledge no other standard or test of doctrine than the *Holy Scriptures alone*.

The intimate connection and essential oneness which exists between the renewed Brethren's Church and the Protestant Churches, and which has combined in one Brethren's Unity the descendants of the old Moravian and Bohemian Brethren, and those who came to us from the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, was described at the Synod of 1744, in the following manner: "The renewed Brethren's Church recognizes within its pale three modes of teaching Christian doctrine, which it distinguishes as the Moravian, the Lutheran, and the Reformed tropus." The same distinction has been subsequently recognized by successive Synods.

§ 95. *Explanatory Remarks.*

The following remarks may serve to explain this declaration more fully. The Churches which sprang out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, in all their various divisions agreed in essentials, and particularly in the two points, that the holy Scriptures constitute the only rule of faith, and that we are justified by faith alone. The ancient Brethren's Church, which had existed for above half a century before, fully agreed with them in these important particulars. The differences between these Church divisions, in their manner of setting forth Christian doctrine, and in forms of constitution and ecclesiastical observances, arise from different views of one and the same divine truth, according to their several gifts, and the special place which the Lord has assigned to each of them in his Church universal: so that the members are not only not separated from, or opposed to each other, but should love one another as brethren; and, maintaining their peculiarity, or in other words, their individual tropus, or mode of setting forth doctrine, may be united together in one Church, inasmuch as they are of one mind respecting that which is essential.

The renewed Church of the Brethren represents such a unity; for, under the ecclesiastical form and order of the ancient Bohemian-Moravian Brethren's Church, it has united together the descendants of the ancient Brethren and other Protestant Christians, who, possessing faith in Christ crucified, and love to their common Saviour, were not obliged to renounce the peculiarities of their particular confession. In this Evangelical Church-union, which is not merely a matter of understanding or feeling, but an existing reality, the

Brethren's Unity possesses a precious jewel, which she prizes highly, and is bound to keep faithfully for future times. By means of this treasure, committed to us by the Lord, we are able not only to keep up our own connection with the Protestant Church, but, as far as our testimony extends, to aid her in the execution of our Saviour's will, that all his children may be *one*.

Although little is said in our congregations, at the present day, respecting these tropuses, the essence of the idea still exists. Hence it follows, that a member of one of the Protestant Churches, in joining the Brethren's Church, does not renounce the faith which he has hitherto professed, or adopt a new creed. And, if members of the Brethren's Church live at a distance from one of our congregations, they need not scruple to join the worship of the Protestant Church of their place of abode. If members of other churches desire to join that of the Brethren, it is the duty of the minister of the congregation where they seek admission, to obtain satisfactory evidence of their knowledge and belief of the evangelical doctrine of the Protestant Church.

§ 96. *Catholicity of the Brethren's Church.*

The peculiar character of catholicity which the Brethren's Church maintains, imposes upon her the duty, while it gives her the ability, to offer the hand of brotherhood to true believers of all denominations, and to be cordially united with them. This has been the practice of the Brethren's congregation from its commencement, and it has never been our wish, by taking an isolated position, to withdraw from other divisions of the Church. The many hostilities to which we have been exposed, have tended to make us prefer that quiet and retirement which, indeed, appeared proper to our peculiar position in the Church; and we have never felt called upon to take part in theological or ecclesiastical controversy. Our writings have been intended for edification, and we have answered our opponents rather by our works than by our words, except in cases where silence would have done harm. If they tell us the truth, we are grateful to them for it; if they remind us of our faults, and make us attentive to our lukewarmness, or want of zeal in following after holiness, we are thankful to receive instruction from them; and, in honour and dishonour, through good

and evil report, to shew ourselves as servants of God and disciples of Christ. We are much interested in the development of the Church of Christ, and in the new life which manifests itself, and willingly take our share in her combats and in her sufferings, as well as her victories, that we may partake with her of the honour and of the reproach of Christ. We should be unfaithful to our calling, if, in the present times, we shewed unwillingness to unite with individual confessors of Jesus Christ, or with evangelical conferences and associations; as, by union with them, we may strengthen each other, in our common faith, against the influential errors which seduce so many. Our times demand an open and decided confession of the truth; union gives spirit and power, and through faith, leads on to victory.

§ 97. *Diaspora Work on the European Continent.*

Our *Diaspora* labours have always been intended to promote this union of the members of Christ with each other, and with Himself their head. As the Brethren's Church is a portion of the Protestant Church,—“her oldest sister and servant,” according to the expression of an ancient hymn,—she feels called upon to tender her services, for the purpose of leading on the right path, souls that are scattered abroad, to stablish them in the love of Christ, and to connect them more closely with us and with each other, by means of the establishment of society regulations, without separating them from their own Church. Rather is it our desire and aim, that, by this means, the living members of the Church should be increased in number and established, and, by more intimate connection with each other, grow in faith, love, and holiness. The extensive circle of these brethren and sisters, and friends, scattered throughout the Protestant Churches, has been called, since 1750 (according to 1 Pet. i. 1,) the “*Diaspora*” of the Brethren's Church. There is a considerable number of smaller societies of the Brethren, in Germany, and other states of the continent of Europe, with different arrangements, varying according to the different ecclesiastical constitutions of their several countries.

While we are painfully conscious of numerous failings and mistakes in this field of our labour, we must record to the honour of our Lord, that in a time of almost universal

apostasy, the quiet and unobserved circles of those who were connected with the Brethren, contributed to preserve a good seed within the national Church, by means of which a preparation was made for that revival of a Christian spirit with which it pleased the Lord graciously to visit it; and in our days this connection with our Church is a means of protecting many souls from unbelief on the one hand, or sectarianism on the other, and of preserving them in their evangelical liberty.

With respect to our congregations, this work has, under the blessing of the Lord, had a very beneficial influence by its tendency to counteract that one-sidedness and that stagnation of spiritual life to which every small community is exposed. The fire of a first love which has often pervaded these little flocks, has put us to shame, and kindled a like flame in many a heart in our congregations. The affectionate respect which they entertain for our Church, has been a call upon us to value our union more highly than we might otherwise have done. As our diaspora connections have furnished us with the means of communicating to the Church at large of that which the Lord has given to us, so have they been the channels through which new life has flowed from the Church to us.

We would also make grateful mention of the zeal shewn by our Diaspora brethren and sisters in aiding our missions among the heathen, both by their self-denying contributions and their faithful intercessions.*

§ 98. *Activity in Great Britain and Ireland.*

The manner in which our congregations in Great Britain and Ireland labour among those who are not members of our Church is very different from our diaspora activity on the Continent. The ecclesiastical relations of the British isles are such, that those who seek communion with us join our Church; hence there are no such things there as societies, in the German sense of the word. Nevertheless, the Brethren's Church in these countries is by no means isolated, but numbers many warm friends, who value our activity in the promotion of the kingdom of Christ, and make our missionary

* Further information respecting this work may be found in the *German Appendix to the Results.*

labours the subject of their intercessions and the object of their assistance. The members of our congregations, again, take share in the operations of the many Christian societies formed in those countries.

For the purpose of sowing the seed of the word of God in the neighbourhood of our congregations, preaching-places have been established, and in attending to these, and in visiting the sick, many opportunities are afforded for testifying of the love of the Friend of sinners. By means of the visits of Scripture readers in Ireland, the word of God is brought into the cottages of the poor, and thousands, who would otherwise have never heard it, are thus made acquainted with its precious truths.

§ 99. *Activity in North America.*

The United States of America offer an almost boundless field for Christian usefulness. Many thousand German emigrants land there every year, with the object of settling in the far west, where they are, for the most part, destitute of all Christian care, of the preaching of the word of God, and of the sacraments. What has been hitherto effected by Christian associations in Germany and America, falls far short of providing for the wants of these wandering sheep; and as many of our diaspora brethren and sisters from Germany are among these emigrants, our American brethren have recognized therein a clear intimation of the Lord's will, and have commenced establishing new congregations in different States. The materials of which these consist are diverse, some of the members having come from the old congregations, others from the German diaspora, and others again being entire strangers, chiefly recent immigrants. The first attempts were, from defective experience, made on no regular plan, but rules and regulations, founded on our general congregation rules, have now been laid down, to which the members of these congregations are required to declare their adhesion. They are, therefore, not in name only but in reality, Brethren's Congregations, although as yet they do not enjoy their full rights as such, not being represented at the Synods. It is a work of faith, and has a powerful claim on the prayers and sympathies of our congregations in Europe. Let us commend it, in faith, to the Lord, that He may be pleased to provide the means and

instruments for extending his kingdom in the new world, and collecting congregations which shall shew forth his glory.

§ 100. *Other kindred Means of Usefulness.*

The activity of our brethren in England and America, just referred to, has, upon the whole, rather the character of a Home-mission than of our German diaspora. Like the former, it has for its main object the awakening and conversion of souls, while the latter seeks principally to promote edification and Christian fellowship. The Sunday-schools which exist, to a great extent, in our British and American congregations, partake of the same character. The main object of these institutions is to instruct those children who have no opportunity of attending schools during the week, and especially to make them acquainted with the holy Scriptures, and to lead them to our Saviour. Nor are our German congregations without facilities for ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of the poor and of orphan children in their neighbourhood, and for assisting, by the distribution of Bibles and tracts, especially among travelling mechanics, and in many other ways, to diffuse the blessings of the Gospel. Almost every one of our continental congregations has now one or more of these means of usefulness at work, conducted by some of their own members. Such services afford a suitable opportunity for preparation for future usefulness in the Lord's vineyard, and those who "tarry by the stuff" can thus be actively engaged in spreading the kingdom of God. The more these labours of love are promoted within the congregation, by associations among the brethren and sisters themselves, the more will the church itself be blessed.

In these home-missions we will not be behind other Christians, who have undertaken them in our days with much zeal, but will gladly join them, in order that, by our united exertions, this work of the Lord may prosper, and the cordial union of his disciples may be promoted; for "We all have one inheritance, and serve one common Lord."

CHAPTER XII.

MISSIONS OF THE BRETHREN'S UNITY.

“The mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel.”—EPH. iii. 4, 5, 6.

“Lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindred and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”—REV. vii. 9.

A. MISSIONS.

§ 101. *Substance of the Mission-testimony.*

IF we are asked, By what power are our congregations gathered from among the heathen, and their members brought from death unto life?—we answer the inquirer in the words of the Apostle, “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him do these men stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 10—12.)

We therefore set forth, as the first principle on which our testimony rests, in every portion of the mission-field, the precious doctrine of “Jesus Christ and him crucified,” even of him “who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (1 Cor. i. 30.) The word of his patience is the sum and substance of our teaching. On this sure foundation, our missionaries, as wise builders, are required to build; always remembering that “every man’s work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it; and the fire shall try every man’s work,

of what sort it is." (1 Cor. iii. 11, 13.) If they build on this foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones,—the work shall abide, which they have built thereupon, and they "shall receive a reward." (ver. 14.)

We will, therefore, deliver this Divine message, "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," but we will determine everywhere, and at all times, not to know anything among the heathen but Jesus Christ and him crucified;—and our speech and our preaching shall not be with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that the faith of the people committed to our charge may "not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. ii. 1—5.)

§ 102. *Special care of Souls.*

We adhere firmly to the principle, that in our efforts for the conversion of the heathen, we will manifest less solicitude to bring a great number of persons to the profession of the Christian faith, than, by means of the Gospel preached with demonstration of the Spirit and of power, "to turn souls from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God."

For this purpose, however, the preaching of the Gospel must be accompanied by the *special care of individual souls*; periodical conversations of the missionaries with the members of their congregations, according to their several classes, and visits to the houses and to the beds of the sick and dying, are deemed of the utmost importance. The Synod, therefore, earnestly commends this portion of their duties to the faithful attention of our Missionary brethren and sisters, and entreats them not to lose sight of the excluded, but, even where these are not conversed with regularly, to invite them to attend the speakings.

§ 103. *Special means for the furtherance of Christian life, and of the knowledge of the way of Salvation among the Members of our Congregations.*

For the edification of our Mission-flocks, and the advancement of their members in the knowledge of Gospel truth, in

spiritual experience, and in acquaintance with the Brethren's history and labours in other quarters of the missionary field, the following means were strongly recommended.

(a.) *Meetings for Scriptural instruction*—in which the word of God is read, and accompanied by brief, simple, and edifying comments, and applications to the daily life,—the object of which should be to impress Divine truth, not merely upon the memory, but also upon the conscience, as “a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;” and to induce the hearer to read the word of God with diligence, and to study its contents with earnest prayer.

(b.) *Special meetings for prayer*, to be held with the whole congregation, for the encouragement of “the spirit of prayer and supplication,” and the promotion of family worship.

(c.) *The communication of narratives from the History of the Brethren's Church*, or the reports of our labours in other lands, in meetings to be held for this particular object.

(d.) *The establishment of Missionary Associations*, and taking part in works of Christian love, such as the Home Mission, and in efforts of other kinds to extend the boundaries of Christ's kingdom.

In addition to these means of promoting spiritual life in our missionary congregations, it must remain an object of our earnest endeavours to raise them by degrees from the state of comparative infancy in which they still are, to one of independence and self-support. They should be often reminded, not only of their duty and privilege, to provide the means for the support of the ministry among themselves, but also of the right to which they may be eventually entitled, of assisting in the management of their own spiritual and temporal concerns, both by counsel and deed. In this manner, we may hope to be able gradually, and by a natural transition, to introduce something like a church constitution among them, and thus the long desired period will arrive, when they will be withdrawn from the list of missionary congregations, and our hands left at liberty for the employment of whatever strength and means may be at our disposal, for the benefit of other more truly missionary fields of labour. The attainment of this important object we ought neither to consider too near at hand,—imprudently seeking to hasten its arrival,—nor yet to treat as impossible or improbable.

§ 104. *Training of Natives for service among their Countrymen, as Teachers or Missionary Assistants.*

The Synod acknowledged with thankfulness to the Lord, that, by his gracious help, some progress had been made towards the attainment of this important purpose, during the interval which has elapsed since the last Synod. Two active missionaries, persons of colour, have been recently appointed to full missionary service, in the islands of Jamaica and Antigua, in both of which islands, good training-schools have been for some time in operation—at Fairfield and Cedarhall,—and have already supplied a number of useful teachers. The training-school at Genadendal in South Africa has also been favoured to furnish not a few valuable school-masters, some of whom have found employment beyond the borders of our own church. Institutions of a somewhat similar kind have been formed at Beekhuisen in Surinam, and at New Herrnhut in Greenland, the fruits of which we must, however, be content to await. In Labrador, hopeful youths are taken under special training by missionaries at every station, and well instructed in the doctrines of holy Scripture.

In order to make yet further progress in this direction,—the subject being manifestly of the utmost importance,—the Synod recommends that search should be made in every congregation for young native teachers and other promising members, of whom it may be hoped that they will reward the pains bestowed upon them, by becoming, in due time, qualified and devoted assistants. These, on the expression of their own desire, should be placed under the care and instruction of some qualified missionaries, who should seek to prepare them for service in the missions, by giving them special instruction, and inviting them to call upon him at particular times, for the sake of spiritual converse, and the examination of their written essays or discourses.—Arrangements of this kind, must however be marked by as little outward show as possible, and no positive expectation held out to the candidate, that he will necessarily be employed hereafter. The instruction given should, further, be chiefly confined to a correct and thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and the application of the knowledge acquired to the heart and to the intended office. Where a regulation of this kind is found to be impracticable, it will be the more

necessary to use every other means at our command for the training of qualified national assistants. It is also recommended, that frequent inquiry should be made by the mission-department whether any regular plan has been adopted, what progress has been made in carrying it out, and what has been the result. With regard to the choice of candidates, it is to be observed, that as much stress is to be laid on the state of mind and manner of life as on their general ability ; nor is it less necessary that the missionaries should pay particular attention to the state of heart of both native assistants and teachers, and maintain a brotherly connection with them.

§ 105. *Use of the Lot in admission to Church Privileges.*

Since the use of the lot in admission to the privileges of the Church has been discontinued in our congregations at home, objections and scruples in regard to the propriety of its continued use in our mission-fields have been entertained by many of our missionaries, while others have manifested a desire that it should be retained in the spheres in which they are called to labour, from a conviction that it has been attended with the Divine blessing.

After careful and mature deliberation on this important subject, and due attention given to the several memorials which had reference to it, the Synod was led to adopt the following resolutions :—

(a.) The use of the lot, in admission to the classes of candidates for baptism and for the holy communion is to be discontinued where it still exists, as these are not properly degrees of church fellowship, and we have a direct command of the Lord to invite all to receive instruction in the Gospel, without reference to their state of heart.

(b.) Where the use of the lot, in admission to baptism and the Lord's supper, is found still to be attended with blessing, as in Greenland, Labrador, South Africa, and Surinam, *the same may be retained as a direction having reference to the time of such admission.* In particular cases, however, it may be dispensed with, where this can be done with entire satisfaction of mind on the part of the missionaries themselves. The same rule applies to re-admission to the classes of the baptized and communicants,—the persons re-admitted being, ordinarily, restored to the classes

from which they had been excluded. Uniformity of practice should, however, generally prevail in each missionary district.

(c.) In like manner, the use of the lot may be retained, in each of the before-named provinces, (Surinam, South Africa, Labrador, and Greenland,) in regard to the reception into the congregation of persons from other churches who join our fellowship, but not in regard to such as have been baptized in our own church, whether as children or adults.

(d.) As to the rest, no essential change is to be made with reference to the maintenance in our mission churches of the several classes of new people, candidates for baptism and the holy communion, baptized and communicants,—this distribution into classes, each enjoying the needful instruction and pastoral care, having every where approved itself as productive of much blessing. The excluded will continue to form a separate class.

Every mission-conference will remain, as heretofore, at liberty to have recourse to the use of the lot in difficult or doubtful cases,—even though such use, in ordinary cases, should have ceased in the districts in which they are called to serve, with reference to the admission to any particular class.

§ 106. *Infant Baptism and Confirmation.*

With respect to the baptism of children in our several missions, the Synod was induced to pass the following resolutions,—containing rules for general observance:—

1. Children born out of wedlock, are not to be baptized by our missionaries, nor children of excluded persons, so long as *both* parents remain under discipline, unless relatives or friends of truly Christian character make themselves responsible for their being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

2. In the event of a person under church discipline continuing in a state of impenitence and hardness of heart two or three years, and manifesting no willingness to receive reproof, he is to be altogether excluded from fellowship—in other words to be considered as no longer in any connexion with our church.

Note.—This rule ought not, however, to prevent a Missionary going after such a lost or straying sheep.

The confirmation of a number of candidates for the holy communion, at one time, after previous careful instruction in the truths of the Gospel, having approved itself as a means of peculiar blessing,—our brethren are earnestly exhorted by the Synod to the faithful observance of this practice.

§ 107. *Baptism of Heathen, who live in a state of Polygamy.*

In consequence of a memorial, praying for the discontinuance of the rule hitherto in force, that a heathen having more than one wife, should not be required to put away all but one, previous to his receiving holy baptism, the Synod took this important subject into renewed and mature consideration, and came eventually to the following conclusions in regard to it:—

1. *That our Missionaries should not be at liberty to require a man, who before his conversion had lived with more than one wife, to put away all but one;—at the same time they should feel it their duty, on every occasion to testify plainly and decidedly, that polygamy is, in itself, opposed to the very nature of a truly Christian marriage,*

2. *That such a man should not, however, be appointed a helper, or be invested with any office in the congregation.*

3. *That a man who believes in Christ, should on marrying, take only one wife, and that he must remain faithful to her, so long as they both shall live.*

§ 108 *Mission Schools, and their financial position.*

The importance of increased attention to education has, of late years, been fully recognized in our missions, and corresponding exertions have been made, so that, in this respect, no special resolutions appeared to be requisite. With regard, however, to the question of finance, the Synod felt it right, clearly to lay down the following principle, though it has all along been partially acted on:—

That the Mission Diacony is not immediately liable for the current expenses of the station-schools, but that these should be covered, if possible, by school-fees and contributions from friends, and the assistance of the Mission Diacony

be resorted to, only where the usual local means prove insufficient.

§ 109. *Further Extension of the Work.*

The undeserved confidence enjoyed by us as a Missionary community in the midst of the general Church of Christ, has, during the period now elapsed, led to numerous applications for the commencement of new Missions. Of these, the mission among the Mongols has been actually undertaken, while preliminary measures have been adopted for the commencement of one among the Esquimaux at Northumberland Inlet. Of the remaining proposals, some had to be declined at once, and the further inquiries and negotiations regarding others led to no result.

As regards the extension of our mission work in general, by entering on new fields of labour, the Synod expressed itself to the effect, that, although our mission-work is a work of faith, it is still requisite to act with discretion, and to "count the cost,"—that there are limits to extension, which, considering the means at our disposal, cannot be overstepped without endangering the internal solidity of the work. These limits the Synod believed to be already reached, so that we ought not to enter upon any new undertakings of the kind without the most thorough consideration, and the most decisive indications of the Lord's will,—so long as the existing fields of labour task our powers so heavily, both as to money, and still more as to labourers. The case is different with the extension of missions already commenced, by establishing new stations, sending out assistants, and similar preparatory measures. Here the necessity prescribes our duty, and where extraordinary circumstances do not limit it, such a growth is the natural fruit and index of internal prosperity. Here, it is our business to rely upon the Lord. Have we hitherto been weak in faith, and failed in consequence, in that willing and devoted service of the Lord, which he has a right to require at our hands; may he lead us to true repentance and renewed strength of faith, so that our Church may more than hitherto, present the aspect of one great Missionary Society, engaged in gathering in the reward for the travail of His soul, from all parts of the earth.

B. MISSIONARIES.

§ 110. *Training of Missionaries.*

The principal preparation for missionary service must take place under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, so that the promise may be verified in all who engage in it: "They shall be taught of God." Human knowledge and external culture would be uninfluential and fruitless, without inward enlightenment and the preparation of the heart. The first requirement of every missionary is therefore, the true conversion of his own soul. He must "have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, being justified by faith." "The joy of the Lord" must be "his strength." He must daily, with humbleness of mind, as a poor but pardoned sinner, repair for cleansing to "the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," and "follow after holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This does not, however, exclude the desirableness of intellectual qualifications for the preaching of the Gospel, the care of a congregation, the instruction of youth, the learning of a foreign language, and other branches of activity connected with missionary service,—or of a certain amount of education and acquirements.

The Synod could not but perceive that the advancing culture of the members of our missionary congregations, both as regards education and Christian intelligence, renders this more needful now than was formerly the case. In addition to these general requirements, there is one of special importance for a large portion of our missions,—a knowledge of the English language.

The consideration of these circumstances led to the following determinations:—

As regards the *general training* of candidates for the mission-service, the Synod does not feel called upon to advise the establishment of special institutions for that purpose. Where the foundation has been laid of a good early education in our congregations,—our choir-houses, and more especially our schools, and employment in their service, afford in all essential points a sufficient preparatory training. At the same time, brethren who offer themselves for mission-service should be reminded by their labourers of the

necessity of preparing themselves for that service to the best of their ability.

It was also recommended, that labourers should go through a course of Christian doctrine, with candidates for mission-service, taking the Summary as a guide,—give them passages of Scripture to commit to memory,—and require them to put down in writing a recapitulation of the subjects gone through, in order to exercise them in a clear apprehension of the truths of the Gospel, and to ascertain whether they have the gift of expressing themselves clearly and intelligibly.

As regards the learning of *English*, the Synod recommends the Mission Department not only, as hitherto, to provide places for German brethren who are deemed suitable for Mission-service, as teachers in English schools,—but, in the case of brethren called by lot to the service of a mission where a knowledge of English is requisite, to place them for a year under a single brethren's labourer or minister in England, for instruction in the language; after which they may receive further practical training by acting as the assistants of town-missionaries, and by attendance at a Training-school.

At the same time the Synod empowered the Mission Department,—in case a class for missionary candidates should be established in the institution lately commenced in England for the training of ministers for the home service,—to avail itself of the opportunity thus afforded.

§ 111. *Testimonials respecting Candidates for Missionary Service.*

The testimonials of brethren and sisters who wish to devote themselves to the missionary service, which are forwarded from time to time to the Mission-Board, should be drawn up with the utmost care, impartiality, and completeness, without any respect to private or personal considerations. Defects of character, which often exercise a very injurious influence upon both persons and things, ought on no account to be concealed. It would therefore be well, if, at the beginning of every year, the respective choir-labourers would send in any remarks they may have occasion to make, in regard to the character or conduct of the candidates already recom-

mended by them, not forgetting to notice any debts they may meanwhile have contracted, and which might constitute an outward hindrance to their being called into service. The schedules hitherto in use should be carefully attended to in every particular. The subsequent experience of the unfitness of an individual appointed to missionary service is often attended with the most lamentable consequences, both to himself and to the mission. It is the more important that the choir-labourers should give a word of warning on this head to the party concerned, as the Mission-Board cannot be expected to provide for the support of individuals whose retirement has become, from any of these causes, a matter of necessity.

§ 112. *Marriages of Missionaries.*

Every missionary being at full liberty to have a proposal of marriage, in which he is interested, submitted to a decision by lot, or to marry without it, according to his own conviction of duty or necessity, it may be the more reasonably required of every brother appointed to or engaged in missionary service, that he should consider, in a spirit of conscientious faithfulness, whether the sister he may desire to marry, be really qualified for the work. At the same time, the Synod expects that the Unity's Elders' Conference and the several Provincial Elders' Conferences will account it their sacred duty to examine in the most careful manner the proposals that may be submitted to them, and to reject such as may be manifestly inadmissible. In the event of a brother being unwilling to withdraw a proposal considered unsuitable, these Conferences are directed to refuse their sanction to his appointment or to his continuance in the service.

§ 113. *Visits of Missionaries at Home.*

Our warmest thanks are due to the Lord of the harvest, who, notwithstanding the progressive extension of our mission-field, has never permitted us to lack servants, willing to labour for Him within its borders, in the spirit of true self-denial. And it is but right, that the faithfulness and diligence, the devotedness and the steadfastness of our missionary brethren and sisters generally should here receive a grateful acknowledgment. Nevertheless, we dare not abstain

necessity of preparing themselves for that service to the best of their ability.

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from noticing the fact that, in the course of the last few years, instances have occasionally occurred of a deficiency of true self-sacrificing zeal for the promotion of the Lord's cause,—several missionaries having relinquished the work in their best years, and returned home to seek another sphere of service.

The Synod was induced hereby to establish the principle, that whenever missionaries, of their own free will, and without any sufficient reason, insist on returning home, they cannot be entitled to have their travelling expenses paid, still less to receive a pension. At the same time our missionaries may rely upon it, that the Mission-Board will be disposed to pay every regard to considerations of health, and in general to the reasonable wishes of their fellow-servants.

§ 114. *Trades and Businesses in the Mission-field.*

Faithfully and generously as our missionary work is sustained by the offerings of Associations and of individual Christian friends, it is sufficiently evident from the yearly statements of the Mission Diacony, that a considerable portion of the means required for its support is derived from the various branches of business carried on for this purpose at several of our missionary stations. The missions in Surinam, South Africa, and Labrador, are in fact entirely maintained by these means.

As it appears, that the prosecution of our missionary work, in its present extent, would be impracticable in any other way,—the Synod had no hesitation in recommending the continuance of these businesses, where they can be carried on with the blessing of the Lord,—with the understanding, however, that the brethren employed in them are regarded as servants of the mission, in the full sense of the term, and competent to assist in spiritual labour. The example of the Apostle Paul is herein to be kept in view. Outward labour of whatever kind, is truly hallowed, when it is performed in the name of Jesus, and for the advancement of his kingdom. It would, therefore, be a serious mistake, were missionaries to be ashamed of engaging in such duties, and to account them beneath their dignity. Nevertheless the Synod found it desirable to pass the following resolution:—

No missionary can be permitted to carry on any business or traffic on his own account—and as little, for the benefit

of the mission, without the sanction of the Mission-Board, to whom he will be required to forward an annual statement of his accounts.

§ 115. *Common Housekeeping.*

The retention of the combined or common housekeeping, where it still exists, may be recommended with the greatest confidence; because it is not only, in ordinary cases, productive of a sensible diminution of expense, but likewise because, when a right spirit prevails, it is found to be a blessed means of increasing brotherly union among the members of one and the same household.

With respect to the relation to each other of the missionaries dwelling at one place, it is proper to observe, that it must be essentially brotherly, each recognizing the other as a colleague; and that, though to one may be committed the office of house-father, and the general direction of the household, he is expected to undertake nothing of any importance, connected with the division of labour, or other matters, without previous brotherly consultation with his fellow-servants.

Should it, however, appear expedient to the Mission-Board, owing to special circumstances or considerations, to discontinue combined housekeeping at any particular station, such a measure is to be regarded as an authorized exception to a general rule.

§ 116. *Official relation of the Missionaries to the Mission-Board.*

Though this relation might seem to be, in the main, so well understood and regulated as to require nothing further in the way of definition,—the Synod found it necessary to express an opinion on one particular subject,—some uncertainty appearing to have existed, as to the duty of a missionary obtaining the previous sanction of his official superiors to the publication of any book, having reference to the field of labour in which he is employed.

The Synod, therefore, with a view to obviate all doubt for the future, passed the following resolution:—

That no missionary shall be allowed to publish any work in reference to the sphere of duty in which he is engaged, with-

out the previous knowledge and sanction of the Board to which he is responsible, viz., the Unity's Elders' Conference.

§ 117. *Conferences preparatory to General Synods.*

On the subject of the regular Conferences already existing in our Missions, the Synod found no cause to make any change; nevertheless it was induced, by memorials from various Missions, to sanction the following extension of the conferential system.

In the conviction, that Mission conferences of a more general character,—having reference to whole missionary districts,—are likely, wherever practicable, to be of great use, through the opportunity they afford for interchange of sentiments, for cultivating mutual acquaintance, and for introducing greater uniformity into the missionary work, as well as for the discussion and adoption of proposals to be laid before an approaching Synod,—it is recommended to the Mission-Department, to take the needful measures previous to a General Synod for convening, as far as possible, preparatory Conferences,—not merely of individual missions,—but also of entire missionary districts.

Where several smaller districts of this kind can be united, such a conference should be attended by but one brother from each mission, or by two at the most.

C. SUPPORT OF THE MISSIONARY WORK.

§ 118. *Missionary Associations and Missionary Festivals.*

The Synod acknowledges with thankfulness the continued activity of a number of greater and smaller Associations, both within and without the borders of our Church, established for the benefit of our Missions among the Heathen.

In our congregations themselves, the increasing sympathy of their members in this important work has been manifested during the past interval in a variety of ways. In addition to the Missionary Societies long existing in London, Zeyst, Bethlehem, and Salem, Associations have been formed in the Yorkshire and other British congregations, in many of those in North America, and likewise in not a few of our choir-houses on the continent of Europe, which have shewn commendable zeal in raising funds towards the support of

the work. Similar associations have likewise sprung up in the various provinces of our mission-field, especially in the West Indies.

Among the many Societies beyond the pale of our Church, which support our missions by their contributions, the London Association, with its numerous branches, continues to distinguish itself by its unwearied activity, and the abundant supplies which it pours yearly into our Mission-treasury. In Denmark, the North Sleswick Association directs its attention chiefly to the maintenance of our mission in the Danish West India Islands; nor is the number of Institutions inconsiderable which make grants in aid of our missionary work out of funds collected for the support of missions in general.

Deeply grateful as we feel to these our kind benefactors, we rejoice in the assurance that "God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love, which they have shewed towards his name; in that they have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. vi. 10.)

The Missionary sermons and festivals, recommended by the last Synod, have since that time been held not only in our congregations at home, but also in many of our missions abroad, and approved themselves a blessed means of awakening interest in our missions. Personal addresses from visiting missionaries being found peculiarly attractive on the occasions in question, and a desire having been generally expressed that the privilege of hearing them should not be limited to a few congregations, it was thought better that these festivals should not be held simultaneously, on the Sunday nearest to the 21st August, the memorial day of the commencement of the first mission of the Brethren's Church, but on such days as may be found most suitable by the Elders' conferences, or labourers of the respective congregations.

§ 119. *Missionary Publications.*

The various periodical publications, of greater or less dimensions, which appear in the German, English, Dutch, Danish, and French languages, and give information concerning our missionary work, being eagerly read by our brethren, sisters, and friends, and serving to keep alive their interest in its prosperity, care must be taken to render

their contents as interesting and edifying as possible. Towards the attainment of this object our missionaries must do their part. Every brother should make a report of the progress of the work committed to him, at least once a year. Our brethren should likewise consider it a matter of duty to be punctual in keeping a diary, and transmitting it,—not merely that the interest on behalf of the mission may be promoted among those who read it, but also that the Mission-Board may be kept in accurate acquaintance with all its concerns.

§ 120. *Care for the Children of Missionaries, and their Education.*

The Mission-Board has ever accounted it a duty to care faithfully for the education and training of the children of our missionary brethren and sisters, and will continue to do so. The Brethren of this Department pay particular attention to these dear young people, both while passing through the schools and while living in the choir-houses; and, in short, supply the place of parents to them as far as possible.

The Synod was led to believe that it would materially lead to sustain these efforts of the Mission-Board, if, in the several congregations in which these children might be placed in subsequent years, as apprentices to one or other trade or business, brethren and sisters [could be found willing to act the part of foster-parents to them in some measure. This service of Christian love may be more effectually performed by the parties who undertake it making frequent inquiries, both from the young people themselves and from others, as to their spiritual and temporal prosperity, by taking affectionate notice of them, and seeking to befriend them, by administering words of faithful counsel and cordial encouragement. Brethren and sisters who feel an impulse to render this important service, would do well to state their willingness to the respective Elders' conferences. The duty of paying all possible attention to this interesting portion of their charge is, however, especially impressed on the choir labourers, who are requested to make an annual report concerning them to the Mission Department.

As soon as the children of missionaries have completed their term of apprenticeship or service, and are placed in circumstances to earn their own livelihood, the Mission

Department will naturally consider itself relieved from any obligation to provide for their maintenance; any further provision can, therefore, be expected from the Board only in extraordinary cases. Nevertheless, should individuals be found among the yearly increasing number of our missionary children, who, whether through their own fault, or by providential visitation, are brought into circumstances of positive destitution,—a state of things which often causes the Mission-Board the utmost perplexity,—the latter must rely on the good will and the brotherly co-operation of the congregations and their respective conferences for the effectual discharge of its embarrassing duties. The Synod, therefore, entreats all our brethren and sisters to take to heart this obligation of Christian love, and confidently relies upon their willingness to do all in their power to care for these individuals, as for all other members of the congregation entrusted to their care, and thus to assist the Mission-Board in the performance of one of the most difficult of its incumbencies, and in the consequent attainment of an object which would else be unattainable, however great the sacrifice made for this purpose.

While reviewing the state and circumstances of the Kleinwelke schools, the attention of the Synod was drawn to the fact that, among the children sent home for education in these institutions, there are not a few of the age of five or six years, more especially little boys, who stand greatly in need of that motherly care and attention which the existing arrangements cannot be expected to supply. A resolution was therefore passed that it should be earnestly recommended to the Mission-Board to take early measures for the establishment of a kind of preparatory institution for boys, resembling an Infant School, in which they should spend their first year, or even the first two years, after their arrival in Europe, and enjoy the care and instruction of a qualified married couple, with the help, if needful, of female assistants.

With reference to the difficulties connected with the "home or birthright" of the children of our missionaries,* the Synod acknowledges with thankfulness the resolutions adopted on this head by the Provincial Synod of our continental congregations held last year. It was nevertheless

* Corresponding to what the English law designates "a Settlement."

thought desirable to determine that, in case the parents are themselves residing in Europe, it is their duty to see to it that the rights of their children are properly secured; but, in the event of their being still in missionary service, or at too great a distance to attend to this matter, they may leave it, without reserve, in the hands of the Mission-Board.

§ 121. *Relation of the Institutions at Kleinwelke to the Mission Diacony.*

In the first instance, the Mission Diacony stand in no other relation to the Institutions at Kleinwelke than in that of a guardian or representative of the missionary children entrusted to its care; and, though the Synod of 1848 designated them as Missionary Institutions, it failed to declare that this was done with the understanding that the Mission Diacony should take upon itself any responsibility in regard to their financial state. It appeared, however, to be desirable that something definite should be concluded on this head, and the Synod came, therefore, to the following resolution:—

“The Institutions at Kleinwelke have their own independent system of accounts like every other school; nevertheless, the Mission Diacony is to be considered in the last instance as responsible for them, and, consequently, as entitled to exercise the right of ultimate decision in all cases of undertakings attended with considerable expense, as well as that of special superintendence in every particular connected with their management.”

§ 122. *Relation of the Mission Diacony to the Brethren's Unity.*

In conclusion, the Synod proposed to itself the question: What is the financial basis on which the Mission Diacony rests?

In the firm conviction that the Brethren's Unity and the Brethren's Missions are inseparably connected together, and that there never will be a Unity of the Brethren without a Mission to the Heathen, or a mission of the Brethren which is not the affair of the whole Church, as such,—the unanimous answer was returned:—Next to the Lord himself, the Mission Diacony has for its dependence the col-

lective Unity of the Brethren, to which the Lord has entrusted this work as its peculiar work; and which, therefore, so long as a Unity of the Brethren exists, even though its Provinces should be in a state of financial separation, will never hesitate to acknowledge that the missions do not belong to themselves, nor yet to a Society, nor even to a portion of the Brethren's Church, but to the *whole* Brethren's Unity.

Thus feeling and acknowledging that we all belong to one spiritual household, and are engaged in the service of one Lord, would we continue to look up to Him, the great Master of the house, with child-like confidence, "seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." May He "increase our faith," also with reference to this great and important work which He has committed to us, with the command, "Occupy till I come," (Luke xix. 13;) and may He enable us to hold fast his cheering word, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. iv. 6.) Thus shall we experience, also in time to come, that he has all the treasures of God at his disposal, and that his promise is sure: "My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord." (Jerem. xxxi. 14.)

CHAPTER XIII.

WRITINGS OF THE BRETHREN'S UNITY.

- "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."—COL. iii. 17.
 "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."—COL. iv. 6.

§ 123. *General Principles.*

THE printed publications of the Brethren's Church may be divided into two classes:—*first*, such as are published either immediately by the Directing Board of the Unity or of a Province, or by individual brethren commissioned by them; and, *secondly*, such as shew by their title and contents that they bear no official character, and are to be considered as of private authority only.

In regard to the former, the old rule holds good, that whatever is published in the name of the Church must have the sanction of the Directing Boards to all that it contains.

In regard to the publications of private persons, or of servants of the Church in their private capacity, the authors or publishers alone are responsible, and not the Church.

The same holds good of all periodical publications, as to articles which appear anonymously, for which, as long as the name is withheld, the editor is personally responsible. This responsibility implies that the authors or editors of books and periodicals may, if occasion requires it, be called to account by the respective Provincial Boards. More specific regulations on the subject are left to the Provincial Synods.

§ 124. *Unity's Publications.*

The earnest wish, expressed at the Synod of 1848, for the publication of a compendious History of the Brethren, has been responded to by the appearance, in three parts, of the "History of the Renewed Brethren's Church," by Br. E. W. Cröger, and, more recently, of the concise "History of the ancient and modern Brethren's Unity," by Br. J. W. Verbeek. Another work of older date, hitherto accessible only in manuscript, has also issued from our press: "Count Zinzendorf and the Brethren's Congregation, by L. C. von Schrautenbach."

The present Synod resolved on a revised edition of the "Summary of Christian Doctrine," that it might again be used as a general text-book of religious instruction in our schools and choir-houses.

§ 125. *Periodicals.*

Our *Congregation Accounts* are intended not only to furnish materials for edification, but especially to maintain and strengthen the bond of fellowship which links together all our congregations in the old and new world. The doings of the Lord with his people, the occurrences in our congregations, missions, diaspora societies, and home-missions, which call for joyful sympathy or for condolence, may thus come to the knowledge of all our brethren and sisters, and keep us in close acquaintanceship with each other.

The earnest wish was again expressed that the three Provinces of our Unity, the European Continent, England, and North America, might be brought into more intimate connection with each other by mutual communications, and the interchange of diaries and reports.

It was suggested that, besides recent courses of life, the most interesting and edifying memoirs contained in the rich treasures bequeathed us from the early days of our Church, should in future be inserted in our Congregation Accounts.

§ 126. *Unity's Archives.*

All our congregations, mission-stations, and provinces of the Unity, have their archives under charge of their several superintendents, for the preservation of official correspondence, diaries, and other manuscript documents. The Unity's Archive, especially, possesses a rich treasure of manuscripts, both old and new, to which an important accession has of late been secured by the purchase of several invaluable records relating to the history of the ancient Brethren.

Important original documents, *e.g.* the grants of privileges made to the Brethren's congregations on the Continent, belong to the Unity's Archive, in case they can be spared, and, where that is not the case, authenticated copies are to be sent in.

So, likewise, copies of the church books, examined and subscribed by the minister, and duly sealed, must be annually forwarded to the Unity's Elders' Conference, or the respective Provincial Elders' Conferences, for preservation in the archives of the Unity or Province; so that in case of the original church books being destroyed, registers of baptism, marriage, and death, might be obtained from these copies. Similar copies are to be sent in yearly to the Unity's Elders' Conference, from the church books kept by the missionaries at every station with especial reference to their own families.

CHAPTER XIV.

FINANCES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT.

“Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season,”—LUKE xii. 42.

“Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

1 COR. iv. 2.

Introduction.

THE regulation of the Finances of the Brethren's Congregations, both general and special, have, since 1764, been recognized as a subject of great importance by all Synods of the Unity, and has, accordingly, received their most careful consideration. They have acknowledged it to be their important duty to lay down rules according to circumstances, for obtaining the means required for carrying on the work of the Lord in the congregations, and, at the same time, to take special care that “honest things are provided, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”

The general Synod assembled this year, has, in consequence of the new form now given to the Constitution of the Brethren's Unity, been led to resolve upon important changes in the general financial management of the Unity.

§ 127. *Former Unity's Finances.*

Hitherto the general finances of the Unity have been committed to the management of the Unity's Wardens' College. This Board had also the superintendence and direction of the diaconies in our congregations. In addition to this, and distinct therefrom, was the management of:—

(a.) The Unity's Missions' Diacony.

(b.) The Unity's Schools' Diacony.

(c.) The Unity's Sustentation Diacony for the congregations on the European continent, and in Great Britain: and,

(d.) The Sustentation Diaconies of the northern and southern districts of the North American province.

§ 128. *Separation of Finances now resolved upon.*

As the actual direction of the affairs of the congregations in the three Provinces of the Unity will, in future, rest with the Provincial Synods, and the Provincial Elders' Conferences nominated by them, the Synod considered that this change in the Constitution, called, at the same time, for a division of the general finances of the Unity.

The mode adopted, as most suitable to circumstances, for carrying out this principle, is for the German Province to take the property of the Unity as it has hitherto stood, in the statement of the Unity's Wardens' College, subject to the payment or satisfaction of all debts and claims which may be made thereon: and, on the other hand, for it to pay to the other two Provinces, for the purposes of their Sustentation Diacony,* their respective shares of the surplus which remains after an accurate and conscientious examination and valuation of the assets.

When this has been done, each of the three Provinces renounces all claims on the others, and is free from all responsibility for any claims made by or on account of the others.

With the exception of the Unity's Missions' Diacony, (see § 127, *a.*), there will then remain only two funds as the property of the Unity; both, at interest, in the hands of the Unity's Wardens' College. These two funds were created before the division of the Unity's property was made; the one intended for paying the expenses of general Synods, the other for the maintenance of the Unity's Elders' Conference, in as far as that may be considered the Directing Board of the Unity, and for paying the expenses of official visits of that Board to the British and American Provinces.

§ 129. *Finances of the separate Provinces.*

In future it will be the incumbency of the Provincial Synods, and of the Provincial Elders' Conferences appointed by them, to make regulations for the management and superintendence of the financial affairs of the respective Provinces of the Unity.

Whatever diversity may exist in the regulations, there must still be a unity of object and procedure in the admini-

* *i. e.*, the general purposes of the Provinces, as distinct from those of the individual congregations.

stration of the finances of the congregations, and the Synod bound itself anew to the observance of the following principles.

§ 130. *Principles of Management.*

The first general principle for the management of our finances is that already mentioned, "to provide for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (2 Cor. viii. 21, compare Psalm ci. 2.) But another, of not less importance, is, that our trade and commerce should be holy unto the Lord; (compare 1 Tim. iv. 5.) What is meant by this sanctification of our trade and commerce, is understood by every one, who, cultivating child-like intercourse with our Saviour, regards the sphere of activity assigned to him,—be it to serve a congregation, a choir-house, or a family,—as from the Lord, and therefore, whilst labouring with all diligence and faithfulness, looks to him alone for the blessing. Such a disposition is the very life of the management of our temporal concerns. And it is, on the one hand, the best safeguard against self-complacency or the unhappy desire of becoming great, for the ablest and most sagacious manager of a diacony or business; and, on the other hand, the best preservative of the less talented and discerning against needless perplexity and confusion. However great the influence of good order, diligence, economy, kindness, and courtesy, on the prosperity of a concern, it falls far short of that which these qualifications exercise, when combined with the disposition just described, and with that faithfulness of heart, which makes the wise humble, and the simple wise. For however valuable in themselves, however essential for the proper management of what is our own, as well as of what belongs to others, they do not secure us from the danger of self-conceit, ambition, the thirst for riches or for pleasure, and the like; things which are sure, sooner or later, to be injurious to every one, and gradually to incapacitate for the right management even of temporal affairs.

The discussion as to the right manner of attending to secular business, in accordance with the principles of our forefathers, caused the Synod cheerfully to acknowledge it to be our duty, first of all and above all, to love the Lord, and then, under the constraining influence of this love, to

serve his house and family. And we also hope, that all our dear brethren and sisters, who are engaged in the service of a diacony-business, a choir-house, or a family, will never forget this principle, as the standard by which we are to try every measure in contemplation for improving our finances, viz. that temporal prosperity is not *the end* of our union, but only *the means* of maintaining it, as far as its outward form is concerned, and of faithfully and honourably fulfilling our engagements to others; from which it follows, that we must freely relinquish any and every mode of gain that casts reproach on the character of a living congregation of Jesus. Hence flows, at the same time, the importance of the warning, "Let no man entangle himself with the affairs of this life," (2 Tim. ii. 4;) a warning to which all our brethren and sisters, who are anxiously striving to improve their temporal circumstances, will do well to take heed, lest in any labour be perceived the aftertaste of sin.

§ 131. *Faithfulness in Management.*

In consequence of careless, and even unfaithful management, of want of superintendence and timely interference, and of the absence of that harmonious co-operation without which we cannot look for success, we have in earlier and later times been involved in many a difficulty for which we must blame ourselves. The Synod, therefore, urges it upon all our brethren and sisters, to whom the management of any part of our finances is committed, to consider how important, and, indeed, how necessary it is for a strict performance of their duty, not only to prevent harm by not concealing threatened mischief in its beginnings, but, at once, by brotherly co-operation with their fellow-labourers and superiors, to seek to avert it. The Synod fully recognizes the faithfulness of those brethren and sisters, who have, in this manner, superintended the management of our temporalities, and also theirs who, in subordinate situations, have been faithful in small things, and laboured on, unnoticed, at their appointed duties, in the sweat of their brow; thus contributing, under the Lord's blessing, to that improvement for which we have so much reason to be thankful.

And since, in every part of our constitution, as we now find it, things temporal and things spiritual are intimately

connected, we cherish the hope that greater faithfulness, caution, punctuality, and good order, in the management of our temporal concerns, will assuredly be attended with blessing, in regard to our inward course, knowing, from sad experience, what a pernicious effect the absence of these virtues exercise on our spiritual state, as well as on our financial prosperity.

May all our brethren and sisters, in reference to their own temporal affairs, and to those of others which are committed to their management, always keep in view our Saviour's words, "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." (Luke xvi. 10.)

Conclusion.

On commencing our deliberations on the 8th of June, the text for the day was: "I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me," (Jerem. xxxiii. 8;) and we felt, as the assembled representatives of our Brethren's Unity, met together to render an account of our stewardship for ourselves and our congregations to Him who is the Head of his Church, who searches the reins and hearts, and before whom nothing impure can stand,—we felt that we required such cleansing and forgiveness from him in manifold respects, and that we had no other right to ask these blessings than what is furnished by his free grace, so often proved by our church, and the promises of his divine word to needy sinners.—We ventured to lay hold upon him on the strength of these his promises, and, though with trembling faith, in the prospect of those serious dangers which, not without our fault, appeared to threaten our union, and of a task to which we felt ourselves unequal, still we ventured to say with the Apostle:—"I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 19.)

And to-day, at the close of our Synod, and on delivering to you, dear Brethren and Sisters, these Results, we can, notwithstanding all the known and unknown imperfections of our work, exclaim with deep abasement: "He *has* granted us, through your prayer, and the supply of his Spirit, to

unite with each other anew as *one* Brethren's people, who know and are determined to know no other ground of salvation than the atoning sacrifice he offered on the cross, and no other rule of conduct than his holy will ; and who, amidst all differences in non-essentials, are *one* in this determination." And we can now all the more confidently rely upon his grace, that he will still further bless both us and you, through our common prayer, and the supply of his Spirit, and "make us perfect in every good work to do his will," (Heb. xiii. 21 ;) to walk according to the principles, drawn from his holy word, to which we have anew pledged ourselves ; to build up ourselves "as lively stones into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," (1 Pet. ii. 5 ;) and increasingly "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." (Eph. iii. 18, 19.)

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. iii. 21.)

J. M. NITSCHMAN,

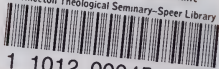
President of the Synod.

Herrnhut Aug. 31, 1857.



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